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The Journal of Rockingham County History and Genealogy



The Rockingham County Historical Society, Inc.

The Journal of Rockingham County History and Genealogy

The journal is published semiannually in June and December by the Rockingham County Historical Society, Box 84, Wentworth, N.C. 27375. Members of the society, for which the annual dues are \$8.00 for an individual and \$12.00 for a family membership, receive the journal. Single issues may be purchased for \$3.50 per number plus 50 cents mailing charge.

Editorial Policy

The publication committee is interested in receiving articles on the history and genealogical source materials of Rockingham County and the adjacent area. The historical articles must be well written and thoroughly documented. Genealogical articles should consist of previously unpublished primary source materials pertaining to Rockingham County, such as abstracts of local records and edited diaries, letters, or church records. Papers on family history should not be submitted. All copy, including footnotes, should be typed double-space. Articles and correspondence should be sent to the editor: Robert W. Carter, Jr., Route 2 Box 392, Reidsville, N.C. 27320

Cover Illustration

Rockingham County was formed December 29, 1785 thus making this the county's Bicentennial year. The illustration on the journal cover is the official logo of the Rockingham County Bicentennial Commission.

The Journal of Rockingham County History and Genealogy

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"...and 100 negroes he brought from Antigua."

by Charles D. Rodenbough

The Moravian Records say that in 1775 James Parke Farley brought 100 slaves to his Sauratown plantation in what would be Rockingham County. If that number is accurate, it represented in a single colony probably more blacks than existed in total in the whole region of the upper Dan River prior to the Revolutionary War.

The records of blacks in this period of settlement are scant, void of narrative and limited to numbers and very few names. The story of the Farley slaves thus provides an opportunity to glimpse a little more of the flesh and bones of that neglected history.

James Parke Farley was the son of Francis Farley. His mother was the daughter of Colonel James Parke.2 He was born on the Caribbean island of Antigua about 1749/50. Francis Farley, the father, was a merchant and planter and his estate was located at Mercers Creek on the north central coast of the small island. In 1755, during one of the frequent trips made to visit trading partners in Virginia, Francis and his brother, Simon, purchased 26,000 acres from William Byrd III.3 This tract, called the land of Eden, was located almost totally in the northeast corner of current Rockingham County, and was the land acquired in two sections in 1728 and 1742 by William Byrd II to serve his grand plan to settle a colony of European Protestants on the frontier. When the elder Byrd died in 1742 his unfulfilled scheme was abandoned by his son who sought only to convert land to currency. He was relieved when the Antigua merchants paid £1,000 for his expendable asset. 4 For their part, the Farleys acquired, in a single purchase, a rich tract equal in size to over a third of the entire island of Antigua. The size of this tract must have sounded princely when compared with Antigua where the average plantation did not exceed 150 acres.

In 1756 Simon Farley died and designated his brother as executor. In his will he left instructions that his land in Virginia and North Carolina should be sold. If sales were subsequently attempted, they were not concluded. Francis Farley made attempts to take legal possession of the land by sending agents to establish small plantations. At least some agents came

from Antigua including men named Crump, Bailey and probably Richard Crunk. In spite of these efforts at preserving the title, however, the Farley land was attracting squatters from among the Scotch-Irish settlers who poured into the Dan River Valley between 1755 and 1765.

In 1769 James Parke Farley was sent to Virginia by his father' to attend William and Mary College at Williamsburg and to develop plans to take over the North Carolina estate which was by then being referred to as the Sauratown. In Williamsburg young Farley acquired both an education and a wife. In 1771 he married the daughter of William Byrd III, Elizabeth Hill Byrd, of Westover.' Thus through this marriage the Land of Eden returned to another generation of the Byrd family. James' intention to take

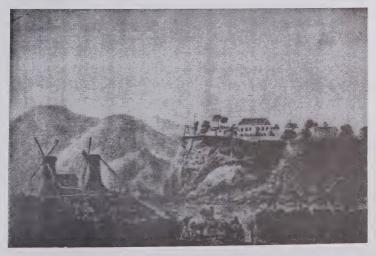


Portrait of Elizabeth Hill Byrd (1754-1819), wife of James Parke Farley. Attributed to Alexander, ca. 1771. From the collection of Anne Carter Greene, photograph courtesy of the Frick Art Reference Library.

"...and 100 negroes from Antigua."

possession of the Sauratown was regarded with reservation by his Tidewater heiress. Raised on perhaps the grandest estate in Virginia, granddaughter of the grandee, only the prospect of comparable circumstances would have brought Elizabeth across the boundary to the backwoods of Carolina which were then considered "an Alsatia for debtors and criminals" and "a home for the better portion of Virginia's poor people". Farley had to envision for his a bride a home which was at least the rival of Westover, and, in order to create such and estate he brought his colony of a hundred slaves from Antigua.

The island of Antigua is the key to a better discernment of who these blacks were and a perception of what they were like as human beings. The West Indies were the richest possessions of the British Crown in the 18th century. By the end of the century it was estimated that four-fifths of British



The Green Castle Plantation of the father of Gov. Josiah Martin of North Carolina. It was typical of the English plantation on Antigua. Picture courtesy of Charles D. Rodenbough.

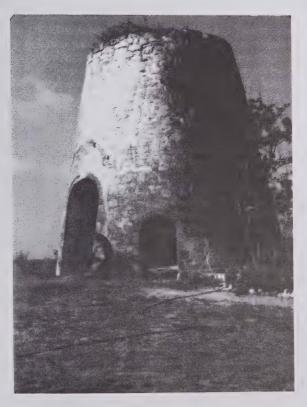
overseas income came from the West Indies and Antigua was the most productive of the Leeward Islands group. ¹⁰ Early attempts to establish the crops of tobacco and cotton on the island had veen superceded by the logic of a sugar monoculture. For an island of just 69,000 acres in total area nearly all of its land and labor needed to be diverted to a single product in order to create a trade large enough to support a market. The value of the product had to be large enough to cover the expense of the buildings and equipment necessary for production. Also there had to be enough sugar, rum and molasses generated to fill ships sailing to Europe or to North America.

The black soil of Antigua, a mix of clay and marl, was rich. Water, however, was unavailable on the island from either springs or streams and it was necessary to construct cisterns to impound rain water. Periods of drought were especially hard on crops and livestock.

Sugar was a difficult crop to cultivate and to refine. The island, once covered in lush natural vegetation, was almost denuded. Slaves divided into gangs, cleared and "holed" the fields. This fatiguing process, carried out using a heavy hoe, dotted the fields with holes six inches deep and about a yard in diameter. Fifty good field hands working ten hours a day could hole a twenty acre tract in half a month. Then, between August and January, two or more cane tops were laid in the hole and lightly covered with soil. After sprouting, in about two weeks, the hole was further filled with soil. The field was then cultivated regularly for two years until the cane was ready for the mill.

The mills and boiling houses were large structures built by the slaves. The mills were wind driven operating on the same grinding principles as a grain mill, except that instead of the horizontal crushing of grain by stone wheels, the cane was inserted into vertical gringing wheels and the juice poured out the side of the mill into a receiver. The receiver was transported to the boiling-house where it was clarified by heating and the application of white lime, and then drained off into an evaporator boiler. After being successively transferred to as many as six other boilers, in each of which the liquid was constantly stirred and skimmed of impurities, it was placed in a cooler where it was granulated. In this form it went into a conical pot or some other large container from which molasses drained. This remaining unrefined sugar, called muscovado, was packed in hogsheads for transport. The British government considered sugar refining as a form of manufacturing in which the colonists were not expected to be engaged. The sugar manufacturing in the West Indies was tolerated because it went no further than the muscovado process. From the pressing of the cane to the completion of the process took up to three months.11

Fundamental to the production of sugar was labor, accessible and in a continuous and inexpensive supply. The use of European indentured labor

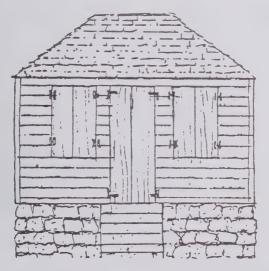


The remains of the Windmill used on the Francis Farley Estate, "Mercer's Creek" for grinding sugar cane. The Farley Plantation house is the only such estate still standing on the island of Antigua. Slaves like those who constructed this sugar mill and estate were at work on the Sauratown when the Revolutionary War began. Photograph by Joshua S. Wall.

wasn't successful because of insufficient numbers. Only the introduction of the black slave in seemingly limitless supply offered the means to maintain the economics of sugar production. The growth of Antigua's sugar economies and the use of transplanted Africans were thus coincident. From trading posts like Cape Coast Castle on the Gold Coast and James Fort on the Gambia, the Royal African Company provided a constant supply of blacks for the plantations of the West Indies and North America. The African Negroes were categorized by identifiable characteristics by the experienced slaver. The Mandingoes were drawn from Senegambia and the Windward Coast. These blacks were known for the delicacy of their features. Many were Mohammedans and some could actually write in Arabic. From the Gold Coast came the Koromantyns who were more resolute and warlike, capable of enduring hardship and pain, and thus dangerous to have in great numbers. East of the Gold Coast were the Whydah Negroes who were similar to the Koromantyns but not as fierce. From the same area came the Popows who were inclined to be submissive and adapted well to agricultural labor. Many were already laboring as slaves in agriculture before they left Africa. From the Bight of Benin along the Calabar Coast and that part of Africa north of the Congo came various types of Negroes especially the Eboe, who tended to be emotional and sensitive and became despondent unless given the most careful treatment. From the south of the Congo were the natives of Angola. As a rule the slaves were purchased from other blacks, usually from another tribe. 12

It was calculated that the average life of a slave on a sugar plantation was seven years. Philip Curtin explained, "conditions which were common to all regions of sugar cultivation, tended to produce an excess of deaths over births among the slave population. This net natural decrease... was normally balanced by continuous slave imports from Africa. This in turn caused the situation to persist, since the African-born suffered from higher rates of morbidity and mortality than the creoles did, and the imported slaves had a sex ratio unfavorable to a high gross birth rate. As a general tendency, the higher the proportion of African-born in any slave population, the lower its rate of natural increase - or, as was often the case, the higher its rate of natural decrease." These factors led to a constant need to bring more slaves as replacements. By 1750 Antigua required 1,700 Africans annually to maintain their labor force.

Slaves in Antigua were grouped as field slaves, tradesmen and domestics and were ranked within these groups according to their skills and experience in such jobs as gang drivers, head boiler men, head carpenters and nannies and cooks. "It was usual for field slaves to work an average 16½ hours per day and 18 hours during the five months of crop." After roll call, work began in the field at 6 A.M. Work continued until midday with a half



Typical residence of slaves on the island Antigua. From Desmond V. Nicholson, Antigua: Settlement Patterns, Antigua: Antigua & Barbuda Archives Office, 1984.

hour for breakfast. Two hours were allowed for lunch and the slaves spent part of that time working in their own gardens. Plantation work began again at 2:00 and continued until 6:30 in the fields. After that the slaves did odd jobs until 8:00. Both sexes labored in the main field gangs without distinction. Tradesmen had more freedom because their special skills made them essential to the sugar production process.

Aside from this schedule of working time, the slave was allowed a habitation of his own with its own garden plot which ultimately became an inheritance of the family devised to the eldest son under a rigid system of primogeniture. The family was allowed specific opportunity to cultivate their garden and they could carry their surplus maize, yams, chickens and other garden produce to nearby markets where they bartered for salt beef, fish or pork for their own use. Janet Schaw, a Scottish lady travelling in the Caribbean in 1774 described the relationship of the blacks in the marketplace. "The Negroes are the only market people. Thursday is a market day, but Sundays is the grand day, as then they are all at liberty to

work for themselves, and people hire workmen at a much easier rate, than on week days from their Masters. The Negroes also keep the poultry, and it is them that raise the fruits and vegetables."¹⁶

The slaves was also to be taught "the way of a Christian and made fit for baptism." On many of the islands of the Caribbean it was the opinion of the planters that by making their negroes good Christians, they would be making them bad slaves. It was held "that by admitting them to baptism, to divine worship, to the holy sacrament and other privileges and advantages of the Gospel they bring them too much on a level with themselves, they raise their ideas above their conditions, they inspire them with pride and ambition, render them less fit for labour, less disposed to fulfill the duties of their humble station, and less submissive and obedient to their masters." ¹⁷

Antigua experienced the most significant impact of the missionary efforts in the Caribbean of the Unitas Fratram or Moravian Bretheran. In the middle of the 18th Century this Reformed denomination, coming out of central Europe, was one of several Protestant groups which were supported by the English crown and encouraged to be part of the English efforts to colonize the New World. The Moravians for their part sought an opportunity to minister to the blacks in the British island colonies fo the Caribbean. In America the denomination established itself in Pennsylvania and North Carolina in self-contained religious communities. The lack of evangelical efforts gave these communities the character of sects clearly segregating themselves from their neighbors. In the islands, however, their work centered on evangelism. In contrast to the Anglican Church, thich was after all the church of the white British owners, the Moravians sought a direct ministry to the blacks. Both churches perceived the African slaves as heathen regardless of whether they professed to be Mohammedan or followers of some primitive tribal faith. The success of the Moravians as evangelists among the Antigua blacks is indicated by the total of 5,465 converts by 1787, about 15% of the slave population. 18 For their part African slaves must have viewed the Christianity of Anglican and Moravian as anything but free grace. People who had been uprooted from their homes, made prisoners by their hostile neighbors, chained in slave forts. transported across a vast water mass to a strange island where their very labor was the property of British masters, were not ignorant sub-humans but captives of another civilization. It is clear that they resisted the imposition of the condition of slavery. Their religious conversion was as much a merging of cultures as it was a spiritual change and because of that their worship remained distinct, not entirely free to be their own, but an amalgam.

Language similarly displayed the conflict of cultures. The slaves were significantly literate in their own tongues, including Arabic. Some were

highly trained. For the slave owner, however, the overriding, constant fear was of a slave uprising. Slave languages represented the means of communication that could be used to incite unrest without the owner's knowledge or understanding. Therefore, the language to be used above suspicion was English and anything else was discouraged, even forbidden. Concentrations of slaves from the same tribe were avoided where possible. The slaves countered with the development of a patois - a blend of African language sounds with English. The native language thus produced was still not understood by many slave owners but it sounded English and when necessary the slaves could shift to pure English within the sentence.

The constant fear that the slaves might somehow coalesce into a force capable of rising against their masters had precedent in Antigua. On October 11, 1736 a grand Ball was planned to celebrate the Coronation of George II. Led by a house servant called Court who was Prince Klaas, a Koromantyn of royal birth, from the Gold Coast, and a Creole, 19 a carpenter named Tomboy, the slaves planted enough gunpower in the cellar to blow up the house where the Ball was to be held. The death of the Governor's son postponed the Ball until the end of October and in the resulting confusion the plot was discovered. Punishment was swift and severe. Prince Klaas was broken on the wheel, a form of torture death in which the victim was strapped to a wheel and all his bones broken, one at a time. "In all, four others were broken on the wheel, six were 'put out to dry' (hung in chains without food), and 58 were burnt at the stake, many in Otto's Pasture on the outskirts of town." 20

Slave laws had reflected the owners' concerns about the potential of rebellion. With the slaves outnumbering their masters 9 to 1, the danger was ever present. Stricter enforcement of those laws was the result of the aborted rebellion of 1736 and, to provide further protection, the Antigua owners applied for the stationing of a Regiment of British troops for which they offered to build adequate barracks. Thus began the increase of the Antigua garrison, which along with the Naval forces at British Harbor and the island Militia made any further risk of rebellion remote.

Throughout the century the slave population of Antigua managed elements of independent action which preserved their identity. Only their labor remained subsurviant. An overseer who was extreme in his punishment or insensitive in the sexual exploitation of his slave crew was as much a curse to the slaves as he was a risk to the safety of the owners. The balance was struck - the presence of armed military and the owner control of the toil of the body of the slaves. Where there was latitude beyond those confines the slaves built their world.

"Slaves were superb musicians and dancers and folklore was an important part of their lives." So slaves tended to talk their beliefs in their

social activities such as night meetings and dances. Their patois was defiance, independence and a cultural retension of their African past. That past was constantly regenerated by the regular influx of newly captured Africans, because of the high mortality rate among slaves.

At the core of "their own worthwhile world within the brutality of slavery" was the family. Most slaves in Antigua lived in family units. Such units were encouraged by the owners. A family meant children and the care of children, and that tended to offset the high mortality. The families usually were small as a result of the mortality and the proclivity of West African women to nurse their children for two or three years and to abstain from sexual intercourse until the infant was weaned. With their own plot of land, the right of inheritance, their own special means of communication, and their adaptation of religious belief, the black family had a skeletal framework of independence.

The slave code could be cruel and restrictive but in all the Caribbean islands they contained liberal provisions concerning people of mixed blood. Private laws were frequently passed giving special privilege to the mixed bloods by name. This led naturally to legal sanctions of racial amalgamation and the manumission of slaves who were the ofspring of these unions with whites. Specific terms were used to identify the blood mixing. A maroon referred to a fugitive slave or their descendants who lived in the wild on some West Indies island. On Jamaica these were slaves of the Spanish who had escaped bondage when the British captured the island. Mulatto, although often used broadly to refer to mixed blood, actually designated a person having one black and one white parent. A quadroon had one black and three white grandparents and a mustee was the offspring of a white and a quadroon. These terms were used to establish legal blood relationships in cases of title or inheritance.²⁶

In 1767 Francis Farley had 171 acres at his Mercers Creek estate in Antigua and 50 slaves and in 1780 he still had the same acres but only 9 slaves. The 41 slave difference represented the bulk of the blacks sent to North Carolina about 1773 for the use of his son, James Parke Farley. Francis had probably only briefly ever visited his Dan River lands but he had spent extended periods in Virginia after 1755. In 1763 he had been one of the original "adventurers" who formed the Great Dismal Swamp Company and for two decades he was a major force in that protracted land development scheme. Some of his Sauratown slaves may have come from Antigua by way of the Dismal Swamp project. Between 1755 and the outbreak of the Revolutionary War, Francis Farley was significantly mobile. His sugar interests at Mercers Creek were on the decline but he remained an Antigua merchant of repute, a vestryman of St. Johns in 1770, and member of the island Privy Council after 1773. He was an active

speculator in Norfolk, Virginia and a familiar guest on the tidewater estates and in Williamsburg.

When Francis decided to send most of his remaining island slaves to his frontier holdings at the Sauratown he probably brought them in through Norfolk. In the group of Antigua blacks he sent to America there were a number of field hands but also tradesmen, gang drivers, head carpenters and domestics. Their skills and training exceeded the brute force demands of the frontier of Carolina. The rounded number of a hundred slaves quoted by the Moravians indicates that the Farley owned Antigua slaves may have been augmented by a quantity of blacks newly transported from West Africa and bought specifically for the Carolina project.

Piedmont North Carolina was not suited to either the growth or production of sugar. Tobacco on the other had was established as a crop well before Farley's time and markets existed in Virginia for the production of a Carolina plantation. When they reached the Sauratown the field hands would have been put to land clearing much as had been the original blacks who were brought to Antigua. The upland red clay fields which they cleared differed from the expanses of black marl earth they had opened on the island. Farley's main plantation was on the south side of the Dan near the site of the earlier Saura Indian town. It contained large expanses of rich river bottomland covered in verdant grasses and Farley brought livestock in substantial quantity from Virginia, cattle and hogs, to roam this grassland. Many of the trained blacks brought from Antigua were certainly occupied in the construction of the mansion house which Farley began for his family in 1774.30 First there was a frame dwelling built in the Williamsburg style with craftsmanship both in construction and design that was not found elsewhere in the area. Perhaps the result was a structure of Virginia design and Antigua craftsmanship. When the main house, which the Farleys named "Bellview", was begun it is clear that such a merger of talent had to be available. Skills that had built estates and sugar mills in Antigua were clearly at work at the Sauratown.31

For those blacks who came to the Sauratown with only a brief stopover in Antigua, the transition was from freedom to slavery and from an inherited culture to a stifling of expression and a control of talent - the ultimate character of slavery. Most studies of the impact of North American slavery on the blacks of West Africa attempts to analyze culture shock imposed on the black. For perhaps half the blacks Farley brought to the Dan there was the intermediate impact of their world in Antigua on their lives and understanding. For some of them, within their own lifetime, they had passed from freedom to the captivity of their labor on Antigua, to the inslavement of their reality in Carolina. Because we know of this progression we can make some assumptions, even observations, about what

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these few blacks were like in these conditions at this time.

Life at the Sauratown was remote but it was not as physically severe as it had been in Antigua. The production of tobacco was less strenuous that was that of sugar production and although the Carolina sun was bright, it was not as stong as that of the Caribbean. Good water in profusion and well drained land meant healthier conditions and seldom was the Piedmont ravaged by epidemics like those of yellow fever which could decimate Anitgua. J.F.D. Smythe could report on his trip to the Sauratown that both Farley's livestock and slaves all, "increased prodigiously." As a result the natural propogation of the slaves was adequate to maintain the slave population without the need to import replacement slaves.



Recent on-site research indicates that this "office" which stands on the site of the Sauratown house may predate the Revolution. If so it may be the pied -A-terre which James Parke Farley built to be used by his young family while the plantation house was under construction. Interior detail, the interior chimney and chimney cap are typical of Williamsburg construction and are found no where else in Rockingham County. Photograph courtesy Charles D. Rodenbough.

The language of the slaves of Antigua was a mark of defiance and independence but basically it was possible to maintain because the slaves were so much in the majority that it was natural for their chosen language to gain popular use. In colonial Carolina slaves were so much in the minority that the use of a black patois had no practical application. Language patterns from Africa and even Antigua were retained by slaves in their use of English, but a distinct separate language form was lost.

Perhaps nowhere in the institution of slavery in North America was its inhumanity more evident that in the exercise of religion. The West African roots in tribal religions and Mohammedanism were stifled as heathenism. But we get a classic insight into the failure of Christianity to minister to the African slave when we consider the blacks from Antigua. One of the details that the Moravians give concerning the Farley slaves is that their own Br. Peter Braun, who served as a Moravian missionary in Antigua, had preached on the Farley estate at Mercers Creek and that when James Parke Farley visited Salem June 29, 1775, "one of the negresses in the party could tell about him, (Br. Braum) as she had attended his services."33 The Moravians had a successful mission among the blacks of Antigua; reports of which they regularaly read and prayed for in their Wachovia congregation. However, their detailed journals do not record a single attempt to minister to these same blacks when they were transported to the Dan River, less than 40 miles from Salem. In Antigua where the blacks were in such an overwhelming majority, how could the white owner minority deny them the services of religion; and if the native religions or Mohammedanism were to be discouraged, it was necessary to actively use mission to substitute Christianity. On the Dan the minority slaves need for some ministry could be ignored. In fact the liberating message of Christianity, unless carefully interpreted, might even become a catalyst to unrest.

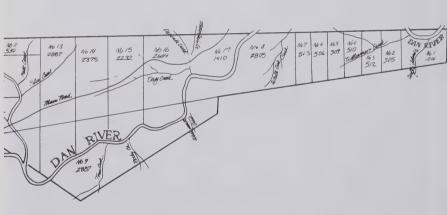
This fear of unrest which might result in a widespread slave uprising was not the real danger on the Carolina frontier in 1775 that it had been in Antigua. The minority position of blacks doomed any such uprising. But there were fears that blacks would attack owners on isolated plantations or that, because of the vastness of the wilderness, they might run away. Large military force was not needed but any broad contact or interaction between slaves and the wider community risked a level of independence that had to be discouraged. Among the Antiguans this change in circumstances can be seen in the contrasting effect it had on the family.

Certainly James Parke Farley would not have risked a rebellion among his father's negroes by dividing families when he choose those to bring to the Sauratown. Once on the frontier, however, much that made the semblance of family exist in Antigua was missing. Slaves could be allowed small gardens for their private use but allowing the sale of their excess

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produce in local markets was discouraged to prevent the interaction with the outside world. There was no ordinance of marriage because to sanction marriage was to make morally reprehensible the separation of black couples or their offspring. There could then never by any questions of inheritance or primogeniture without the ownership of land or the sanction of marriage. The laws of Antigua that had protected the form of the family were absent in the North American colonies. Without that protection of law there was also a change in the treatment of people of mixed blood. Simplistically in the colonies a person identified as having any black ancestry was considered black. Unless freed by a specific private act of law they were slaves. Terms like mulatto, quadroon and mustee had no practical relevance under those conditions.

For some who came to the Sauratown this change in legal application had



Surveyors plat of the 26,000 acres Sauratown lands in Rockingham County.

special significance. When Smythe visited the Sauratown in the Spring of 1774 he spent an idyllic week with a family named Bailey on the Farley land. He was attracted to lovely and amiable Betsy, the younger daughter of the family which he described as, "a large family of Bel Savages." The Baileys had probably been sent from Antigua at an earlier date by Francis Farley to operate one of the various plantations set up at the Sauratown. The Bailey land in Antigua adjoined that of John Farley, James Parke's grandfather, near Falmouth Harbor. This Bailey at the Sauratown was possibly of mixed blood. There are other indications that Farley may have sent several Antiguans of mixed blood to the Sauratown. In the transition, these quadroons or mustees, assuming their skins were light, became whites. This transformation of mixed blood Antiguans to the full priviledge of master was a melancholy antithesis to the lot of the black slave stolen from his home in Africa, robbed of his labor in Antigua and finally purged of his dignitiy on the Colonial frontier.

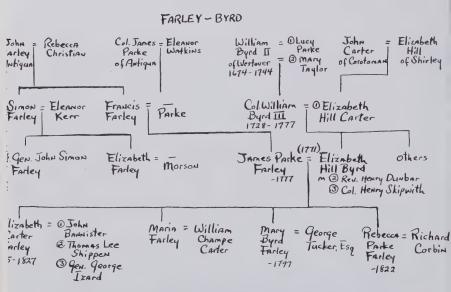
James Parke Farley's plans for the Sauratown did not come to final reality. Throughout 1775 the house on the hill above the Dan River continued to grow. Enough had been built by November that the Farleys sent a wagon to Willimsburg for some of the family furniture stored at Mrs. Blair's. Elizabeth Byrd continued to be reticent about the prospect of living in this place so far from her home and she was becoming concerned about the infrequent correspondence from her father. Farley was making regular shipments of wagon loads of tobacco to Virginia and his wagons were returning with trade goods for the frontier.

The clouds of Revolution exploded into open conflict in New England and soon Virginia was torn between loyalty to the Crown and the firebrands of liberty. In North Carolina James Farley became a delegate of Guilford County to the Third Provincial Congress. But his father-in-law was devastated by the fear of the effect of the approaching conflict prophesying correctly that the world, both economic and social, of the Tidewater aristocracy would be swept away. On New Year's Day 1776 the despondent William Byrd III committed suicide. The Farleys returned to Virginia and in May 1777, while visiting Mann Page II at Rosewell in Gloucester County, James Parke Farley died. Two years later, in the Spring of 1779, Colonel Francis Farley, Privy Counciler, died in Antigua. The Spring of 1779 of the despondent francis Farley, Privy Counciler, died in Antigua.

Elizabeth Farley clearly had no intention of returning to the Sauratown. She had been left with four small daughters who some day would take their place in Virginia society and they needed nothing of frontier training. During the course of the war some of the Sauratown slaves, perhaps those with special skills, may have been brought to Virginia. At the close of the War the battle came very close to the Sauratown. In 1781 as the armies of

Nathaniel Greene and Lord Cornwallis played fox and hounds preceeding the Battle of Guilford Court House, parts of the armies crossed the Farley land. Following the battle the Farley house became a minor field hospital.

At the end of the Revolution the Farley estate employed an Irishman, James Taylor, as overseer/manager and he probably lived with his family at what had been built of the mansion house. The 1790 census shows that James Taylor had 32 slaves at the Sauratown for himself and the estate. This indicates that some of the original body of slaves had been sold, moved to other plantations on the Farley estate or returned to Virginia.



Farley - Byrd Family Tree. Drawn by Charles D. Rodenbough.

"... and 100 negroes from Antigua."

These transported Antigua blacks, however, did not totally disappear into history. In 1799, "at the mansion House of the said Sauratown." commissioners divided part of the personal property of the late James Parke Farley twenty-two years after his death. In addition to horses, cattle and hogs, the slaves were divided between the four Farley daughters. To Maria, through her husband William Champe Carter, went Abraham, Molly and their children, John and Isaac, and the single woman, Patty, who was probably elderly. To Elizabeth, the widow of Thomas Lee Shippen, went Lydda and her child, Charlotte, Nancats and Malbro, To George Tucker, the husband of the deceased Mary, went Peggy, Pattey, Cudio and his wife, Affey, old Bill and Molley Stephens. To Rebecca and her husband, Richard Corbin, were assigned young Esther, Mary, Hannah, Cator and his wife, Esther, and Polydone. There is the hint that even in this division of property family relationships were preserved a quarter century after these people had been brought from Antigua. In the name list there are some special echoes. Malbro represented a connection with the Parke family who always glorified their ancestor's service to Queen Anne and the Duke of Marlborough. The name Nancats. Cator and Cudio retain native sounds that might even be African in origin and Molly Stephens retained a family name even in slavery which might show she was of mixed blood. 41

C.L.R. James wrote, "the slave brought himself; he brought with him the content of his mind, his memory. He thought in the logic and language of his people. He recognized as socially significant that which he had been taught to see and comprehend...He valued that which his previous life had taught him to value; he feared that which he feared in Africa, "42 and for a few blacks on the Sauratown in the last quarter of the 18th century we might add, in Antigua.

Notes

¹Adelaide L. Fries (ed.), Records of the Moravians in North Carolina, (Raleigh: Department of Archives and History, reprint, 1968), 2:876. Diary of Salem Congregation, June 29, 1775, herinafter cited Fries, Moravian Records.

²Vere Langford Oliver, The History of the Island of Antigua, (London: Mitchell and

Hughes, 1894), 2:2-3, herinafter cited Oliver, Antiqua.

³Rockingham County Deed Book A, Page 10. This original deed was recorded in Orange County. It is peculiar since William Byrd III claims to have received 6,000 acres of this tract by a grant in 1742 in spite of the fact he was only 14 in that year and in clear records William Byrd II was actually granted this particular acreage March 22, 1743.

⁴John Ferdinand Dalziel Smyth, A Tour in the United States, (Reprint Arns Press, Inc., 1968) 2:258, herinafter cited Smyth, Tour of the United States. There appears to have been an earlier sale to a man named Maxwell, who on his first visit to the Land of Eden found a great flood in progress and backed out the sale.

⁵Oliver, Antigua, 247-49. Francis took very seriously his charge as executor of his brother's estate and assumed care and a fatherly concern for Simon's several children. (See Wythe, Virginia Reports, Annotated-Farley vs Shippen, Carter, etc.)

⁶Archibald Henderson, The Conquest of the Old Southwest. (New York, The Century

Company, 1920), 9.

⁷Smythe, Tour of the United States, 258.

⁸Virginia Vital Records, (Baltimore Genealogical Publishing Company, reprint 1982), p.236 from Virginia Gazette edited by Alexander Purdie and John Dixon. The Byrds were married March 28, 1771.

⁹John Fiske, Old Virginia and Her Neighbors, (Boston and New York, Houghton, Mifflin

and Company, 1899) 314-315.

¹⁰Charles W.E. Jane, Shirley Heights, The Story of the Redcoats in Antigua, (English Harbour, Antigua. 1982) 5, herinafter cited Jane, Shirley Heights.

¹¹Lawrence Henry Gipson, The British Isles and the American Revolution, (New York, Alfred A. Knopf, 1957) 2: 194-195, herinafter cited Gipson, British Isles.

¹²Ibid., 268-269.

¹³Herbert G. Gutman, The Black Family in Slavery and Freedom 1750-1925, (New York, Pantheon Books, 1976), 340, herinafter cited Gutman, Black Family.

14 Ibid., 276.

¹⁵Mark Harding, Slaves, Slavery and Insurrection, (St. Johns, The Antigua Archives Committee, n. d.), 2, herinafter cited Harding, Slaves.

¹⁶E.W. Andrews and C.M. Andrews (eds.). The Journal of a Lady of Quality, (New Haven, Yale University Press, reprint, 1939), 88.

¹⁷ Olva Flux, The Influence of Church and School Upon the Antiguan Society, (Published by the Antigua Archives Committee), 1.

¹⁸Gipson, British Isles, 2:219.

¹⁹Creole refers to a black born on the island as opposed to African born.

²⁰Jane, Shirley Heights, 13.

²¹Harding, Slaves, 5.

²²Ibid., 4.

²³Ibid., 3.

"...and 100 negroes from Antigua."

- ²⁴O. Patterson, Sociology of Slavery, (1975), 65. B. Higman, Slave Population and Economy in Jamaica 1807-1834, (1976).
 - ²⁵Gutman, Black Family, 331.
 - ²⁶Gipson, British Isles, 2:197.
 - ²⁷Oliver, Antigua, 1:249 and 3:396.
 - ²⁸Fillmore Norfleet, Suffolk in Virginia, (1974), 114-117.
 - ²⁹Oliver, Antigua, 3:358.
- ³⁰Marion Tinling (ed.) The Correspondence of The Three William Byrds of Westover, Virginia 1684-1776. (Charlottesville, The University Press of Virginia, 1977). 2:807 herinafter cited Tinling, Correspondence of Byrds. Letter dated June 10, 1775, Elizabeth Hill Byrd Farley to William Byrd III "I flatter myself your affection for me will make you desirous of knowing how I like the Saura Town; I think the situation pretty and I fancy very healthy as the hill is high and dry. We have a house begun. Mr. Farley talks of making improvements, which I can't say gives me any satisfaction as it seems to convince me he always intends living here."
 - ³¹A small building at the Sauratown shows clear similaritied to Williamsburg architecture.
 - 32 Smyth, Tour of the United States, 259.
 - ³³Fries, Moravian Records. 2:876.
- ³⁴Oliver, Antigua 3:351. "Will of William Bailey, planter, to Becky, daughter of Thomas Jackson, formerly of Antigua, belonging to the trust estate of James Parke Farley £100 to redeem herself..." Recorded 8 Sep. 1798." "Richard Bailey, planter, will dated 3 Aug. 1798...£200c. to free my mustee son called Richard."
- ³⁵The family of Crump on Antigua, may have also sent mixed blood offspring to the Sauratown.
- ³⁶Tinling, Correspondence of Byrds, 816. This may have referred to the Blair home at North England and Nicholson Streets or the Blair house on Duke of Gloucester Street.
- ³⁷John L. Cheney, Jr. (ed.), North Carolina Government 1585-1974, (Raleigh, N.C. Department of the Secretary of State, 1975), 155.
 - ³⁸Virginia Gazette, May 23, 1777.
 - ³⁹Oliver, Antigua, CXXIV.
- ⁴⁰The Magazine of American History, Vol. 7, (1881), "The Southern Campaign: 1781: From Guilford Courthouse to the Seige of Yorktown narrated in the Letters from Judge St. George Tucker to his wife" 36-46.
 - ⁴¹Rockingham County Court Minutes. (1796-1803), 169, November, 1799.

The Story of Edgewood Farm

by

Robert W. Carter, Jr.

The ante-bellum plantation which became known as Edgewood Farm was located five miles northeast of Reidsville, North Carolina near the village of Lawsonville. The farm was located on what later became known as the "Narrow Gauge Road."

Samuel Watt settled on "Lower" Hogans Creek as early as 1752.3 He was probably a close relative of John Watt who later owned Edgewood Farm. John Watt was born in Dublin, Ireland in August, 1759, according to one source.4 However, in 1816 a visitor to the county, who met and talked to John, recorded that he was "a facetious Irishman from Londonderry settled in this Country for many years." As the Watts were Scotch-Irish Presbyterians, Londonderry in Northern Ireland would appear more likely to have been his birthplace.

Samuel Watt sold John several tracts of land along Hogan's Creek in the late 1780s and early 1790s. On November 9, 1810 John Watt purchased a 637 acre tract of land including a grist mill on Lick Fork Creek from Thomas Chambers for \$3,200. This land later became the eastern end of the Edgewood Farm.

William Chambers settled on Lick Fork Creek as early as 1772. The family erected a grist mill on Lick Fork which served as a campsite during the Revolutionary War. The Dix's Ferry Road, one of the main arteries of travel during the Revolutionary period, passed through the present Lawsonville area. In early March 1781, shortly prior to the Battle of Guilford Court House, General Nathaniel Greene marched his troops along the Dix's Ferry Road after Lord Cornwallis moved his army north toward the High Rock Ford on Haw River where Greene had been camped. Arriving in the Lawsonville area on March 8, 1781, Greene encamped his army at Chambers' Mill for the night. After intelligence was received that Cornwallis had moved the British Army south, Greene marched his troops back to High Rock Ford on March 9th.

It appears that John Watt settled on the Chambers' Mill tract where he built a typical planters home of that period. Apparently he prospered because the 1815 tax list¹⁰ records him as the owner of 1126 acres of land

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and nine slaves of taxable age. Watt also continued to operate the grist mill which had been erected by the Chambers Family. In February 1811, the county court ordered Francis Cornwell to be the overseer of "the road from the Caswell Line to Chambers' Mill now Watt's Mill." In 1828 the court ordered "Joseph Mitchell to be overseer of the road from John Watt's Mill to Ruffin old field." As the Ruffin Plantation "Oakland" lay we't of the Watt property there is no doubt that the road mentioned is the present "Narrow Gauge Road."

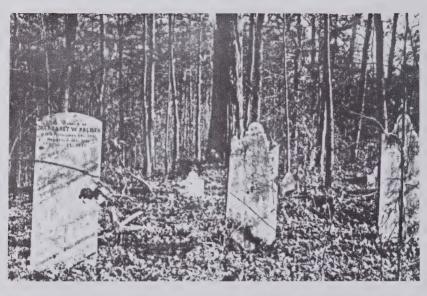
John Watt's relative Samuel served as one of the early Justices of the Rockingham County Court. This was a very important office before the Civil War because the justices conducted both the courts and the business matters of the county. In February, 1816 John Watt vas appointed one of the justices of the county and continued in that position he remainder of his life. 14

John and his wife Margaret were members of Bethesda Presbyterian Church in Caswell County. ¹⁵ According to an entry in the church records dated February 19, 1820 John was appointed an Elder to attend the next session of the Presbytery to be held at New Bern. Both John and his son Robert served as ruling Elders at Bethesda. It appears that John's other children were members of the church also and in later years his grandson, the Rev. John Watt Montgomery, served as pator of the church from 1855-1866.

John Watt and his wife Margaret had eight children: Rachel Watt, who married David Lanier in 1811; Robert Watt (1797-1840); John Newton Watt (1804-1845); Jane Watt (1806-1854, who married David Montgomery of Caswell County in 1825; Ann "Nancy" Watt (1809-1841); Margaret Watt (1811-1843), who married John R. Palmer in 1836; William Pinkney Watt (1815-1876), who married Sarah S. Dillard in 1848; Mary C. Watt, who married James Mebane in 1847. 16

Watt wrote a will on May 6, 1828 in which he left the home tract to his wife. At her death the property was to go to his son William Pinkney. He mentioned 21 slaves by name and devised to his son John N. a 344 acre tract of land which was located on Troublesome Creek. According to his tombstone, he died October 29, 1829. He was buried on his farm on a hill overlooking Lick Fork Creek. On November 12, 1829 his obituary appeared in a Raleigh, North Carolina newspaper:

"Died at his residence in Rockingham County on the 20th (sic) October, John Watt Esq. He was for many years a Justice of the Peace, and was always distinguished for his manly and impartial decisions. His loss will be severely felt by his family and friends."



Tombstones in the Watt Family cemetery near Lawsonville. Photograph by Fletcher Waynick. From the Reidsville Review, November 22, 1978.

John's wife Margaret was born on December 26, 1772 and died July 24, 1852. Both she and most of the Watt children are buried in the Watt Family Cemetery¹⁹ and their graves were marked with large tombstones. There are over sixty other graves in the cemetery marked only by field rock. Perhaps some of these graves are of slaves.

William Pinkney Watt (known as Pinkney) who inherited the homeplace was born about 1815. ²⁰ In 1848 he married Sallie S. Dillard at the home of her father Col. Peter H. Dillard in Henry County, Virginia. ²¹ The marriage ceremony was performed by Rev. William N. Mebane, ²² a Presbyterian minister.

By 1850 Pinkney Watt was operating the plantation with the labor of 40 slaves. 23 Tradition relates that he was a kind master and in fact once fired an overseer who struck one of the slaves. 24

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Photo of an oil portrait of William Pinkney Watt painted in 1853. According to family tradition, the cut across the face of the portrait was made by a Yankee officer who passed the plantation at the end of the Civil War. The portrait is now owned by a great-grandson, Price Watt. Photograph courtesy of Hugh Jack Johnson.

Watt was frequently appointed by the county court to commissions to rebuild bridges, oversee roads in the area and divide property among the heirs of deceased neighbors. One of his most important services to the county was his service as one of the superintendents of the Common (free) Schools. In November each year several superintendents were appointed by the county court to oversee the school system for the ensuing year. Watt served in this position from 1849-1859. While it is unknown where the older Watt children attended school, several of the younger members of the family attended Penile School²⁶ which was located at Penile Methodist Church adjoining the Watt Plantation.

In 1858 Watt had a large Greek Revival 2-story frame house with Italianate features erected. According to family tradition Watt and his wife named the house Edgewood because it was adjacent to a large body of woods. The house had two Italianate style porches with elegant latticework posts and upper balustrades. Both porches had trabeated double door entrances. The house with bracketed and eaves and interior chimneys with stuccoed stack panels also had a stuccoed rock foundation which simulated square hewn stone underpinning. Originally the foundation was painted blue. An unusual feature of the house was a pair of arched alcoves flanking the mantel of the south parlor. The contractor of the house incorporated John Watt's old house into the rear of the new structure so completely that no one in the Twentieth Century realized that the old house still existed.

In 1860 the slave population on the Watt plantation had increased to $64.^{29}$ At the beginning of the Civil War Pinkney Watt and Hugh K. Reid were

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appointed by the county court as the Military Commissioners of the Lafayette District in which they lived. By 1863 Watt was appointed the tax lister in the district and continued in that position as late as 1868.

In addition to the land he inherited, Watt purchased 1,400 acres of land from his brother-in-law John R. Palmer in 1851. This land was formerly part of the Sterling Ruffin plantation known as "Oakland." With both tracts he owned a total of 2,220 acres. Watt also continued the operation of his father's grist mill of Lick Fork Creek. The court minutes for August 1853 record that R.W. Lawson, J.W. Neal and Jackson Jones were appointed to a commission to repair the bridge across Lick Fork near W.P. Watt's Mill. 32



Edgewood Plantation house erected in 1858 by William Pinkney Watt. Photograph made in 1978 by Fletcher Waynick. From the Reidsville Review, November 22, 1978.

John Gary Anderson who lived at Lawsonville in the early 1870's later wrote that "Pink Watt...owned a little...cornmill on Lick Fork Creek...operated and run and propelled by an old-fashioned overshot water wheel...(which) did duty for the surrounding country for miles in every direction. The mill itself was of the old-fashioned variety, the flint burrs, some 50 inches in diameter...ground the corn into meal at the rate of about a bushel per hour...the dam was about 10 feet high...Mr. Pearson (was) the miller..."

The mill continued in operation as late as 1880 but by 1900 only the mill wheel remained and it was half buried in the creek bank. 4 By 1930 nothing remained at the site except one end of the dam. 55

Anderson wrote fond recollections of growing up at Lawsonville and playing with the younger sons of Pinkney Watt. They often went swimming at Watt's Mill and fishing at the "Hanging Rock" which is on the North Prong of Lick Fork Creek. Anderson also wrote: "Pink Watt...was a large planter and slaveholder, and one of the finest and plainest men I ever knew. He raised a large family, and like all the rest of us, though not so badly as most, he lost most of his wealth as a result of the war. This naturally had its effect on his children but all of them married and, I understand did well..."

In 1875 Pinkney Watt sold Samuel T. Walker 77 acres of land. On May 15, 1876 he sold William Johnson 85 acres of land which Johnson had been renting since the end of the Civil War. Johnson (1813-1896) who was Watt's overseer during the war, paid \$516 for the land.³⁷

On August 20, 1875 Watt wrote a will in which he left his entire estate to his wife during her lifetime. At her death the estate was to be equally divided among all his children. 38 According to the Bethesda Church records Watt died on October 8, 1876. He was buried in the family cemetery on his farm. His tombstone was broken and lost many years ago. 39

By 1885 his widow Sarah (born 1827) had a house built on Lindsey Street in Reidsville where she lived during the winter months. ⁴⁰ Every summer for many years she returned to Edgewood and kept open house during the season. Several of her children and grandchildren made long visits at Edgewood where they had "the best times." An interesting story passed down in the family concerns the marriage of one of the Watt daughters at Edgewood. Eugene D. Watt was the youngest child in the family. His older sister Sarah ("Birdie") was his favorite sister. When "Birdie" married Samuel C. Penn, Eugene was very upset about losing his sister. While the rest of the family threw rice at the newly married couple as they left Edgewood, Eugene stood on one of the porches and threw rocks at the bridegroom. ⁴¹ Sarah Dillard Watt died in 1914 and was buried in Greenview Cemetery in Reidsville.

The children of Pinkney and Sarah Dillard Watt were: Annie Elizabeth (1851-1882) who married R.P. Richardson, Jr., a Reidsville tobacco

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manufacturer; John Newton Watt (1853-1926), a Reidsville tobacco warehouse operator; W.P. Watt, Jr. (1856-1906) who married Marion S. Richardson (sister of R.P. Richardson), a Reidsville businessman who was three times mayor of Reidsville; Peter D. Watt who married Sadie Sloan; Mary Alice Watt who married William R. Staples, a Reidsville businessman; Sarah (Birdie) Watt who married Samuel C. Penn, (brother of Reidsville tobacco manufacturer Frank R. Penn); Robert Lee Watt (1864-1939) who married Annie Galloway and became president of the Citizens Bank in Reidsville; Margaret M. Watt (1866-1924) who after her sister's death married R.P. Richardson, Jr.; and Eugene D. Watt (1868-1941) who married Edna Lindsey and lived in the William Lindsey homeplace on Main Street in Reidsville.

In 1896 the Pinkney Watt farm at Lawsonville was surveyed and found to contain 1822 acres. $^{\!43}$ The farm was cut into nine tracts and divided among the heirs. Maggie Watt Richardson received tract number one which contained the Watt homeplace Edgewood. P. Watt Richardson, the son of



South view of Edgewood in 1980 shortly before demolition. Photograph courtesy Robert W. Carter, Jr.

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her deceased sister Annie E. Watt Richardson, received tract number two containing the Watt Family Cemetery. These two tracts totaling 500 acres became known as R.P. Richardson's Edgewood Farm. Eugene D. Watt received the adjoining tract which is now owned by his daughter, Mrs. W.C. Stokes. The tract received by Robert Lee Watt is now owned by his grandchildren and the P.D. Watt share is owned by Mrs. Nell Penn Watt Spencer.⁴⁴

In January 1902 R.P. Richardson, (Jr.) employeed Patterson F. Galliher as the overseer of the 500 acre Edgewood Farm. ⁴⁵ In August 1902 a tragic fire occurred at the farm. A large new stable burned killing ten mules and Richardson's "elegant horse." The fire also consumed two old stables, a silo, feed barn, reepers, plows, wagons and harnesses. ⁴⁶ The family always believed that a disgruntled tenant set the fire. ⁴⁷ Richardson rebuilt a large stable which stood until the early 1980s when it was destroyed by fire after being struck by lightning. By 1907 a canning plant had been erected at Edgewood Farm for the use of the local people. ⁴⁸

R.P. Richardson, Jr. died in 1922^{49} and Edgewood Farm later became the property of his son R.P. Richardson, III who was a grandson of Pinkney Watt.



West view of Edgewood in 1980. Photograph courtesy Robert W. Carter, Jr.

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By the late 1920s all the slave quarters at Edgewood had been demolished. So Also by the 1930s most of the elegant boxwood garden in front of the house had been removed. Although the Watt homeplace was used as a tenant house for a long period, the Richardsons kept the house in good repair. Later abandoned, vandals broke the windows and gradually the house deteriorated until it was demolished in 1982. Today the only original building from Edgewood which survives is the smokehouse which has been dismantled and rebuilt by the Rockingham County Historical Society at the Wright Tavern in Wentworth.

Edgewood Farm remained in the Richardson Family until January 4, 1979 when the heirs of R.P. Richardson, III sold the property to Thomas E. and Gary T. Kimbro who had been renting the farm for many years.⁵¹

With the loss of the Edgewood house, Rockingham County truely lost one of its finest ante-bellum plantation homes.

WATT CEMETERY

The cemetery is located on a hill one mile Northwest of Lawsonville on the Narrow Gauge Road (S.R. 2552). There are at least 73 graves. About 58 of the graves are marked by field rock with no inscriptions. Recorded by Robert W. Carter, Jr. April 12, 1980.

NAME	DEATH DATE	REMARKS
MONTGOMERY	•	
A. E.	14, 1864	Born13,1848 Broken stone
James N.	October 2, 1857	Born June 4, 1827
Jane W.	August 28, 1854	Born December 4, 1806
Wm. P.	April 3, 1859	Born August 18, 1831
	No dates	Broken stone
PALMER		
Margaret W.	June 25, 1843	Born November 25, 1811
Robert G.	September 21, 1863	Born August 9, 1839
		Son of J.R. & Margaret
		Palmer.
		Fell at Chickamauga.
RICHARDSON		
	August 30, 1882	Born July 20, 1851
		Wife of R.P. Richardson, Jr.
***		Broken stone
WATT		
Ann S.	June 20, 1841	Born May 28, 1809
John	October 29, 1829	Born August 1759 in
		Dublin, Ireland.
John N.	January 6, 1845	Born May 12, 1804
Margaret	July 24, 1852	Born December 26, 1772
Robert	January 28, 1840	Born June 14, 1797

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¹Lawsonville was once a busy trading center with several stores and tobacco factories. It declined after the railroad came through Reidsville during the Civil War. The settlement was known as Lawson's Store when the first post office was opened in 1830. In 1832 Robert W. Lawson (1792-1871) was named as postmaster. In 1848 the name was changed to Lawsonville.

²The Narrow Gauge Road was named late in the nineteenth century by Hugh W. Johnson who said the narrow, crooked road through the woods was like a "narrow gauge road." Tradition from the late Robert Jackson.

³Samuel Watt is mentioned in early Granville Grants.

⁴John Watt's tombstone states he was born in Dublin, Ireland.

⁵Charles D. Rodenbough, "General George Izard Visits the Sauratown, 1815-1816." The Journal of Rockingham County History and Genealogy, Volume VIII, Number 1, (June 1983), 11.

⁶Rockingham Deeds: Book B, 214; Book C, 290.

⁷Rockingham Deeds: Book O, 58.

⁸Guilford Deeds: Book 1, 124.

⁹Kenneth R. Haynes, Jr., "The British Invasion of 1781", The Heritage of Rockingham County, (Winston-Salem: Hunter Publishing Company 1983), 14.

¹⁰The 1815 tax list was printed in The Journal of Rockingham County History and Genealogy, Volume V, Number 2, (December, 1980), 21.

¹¹Rockingham Court Minutes, February 1811, 182.

¹²Rockingham Court Minutes, November, 1828.

¹³Judge Thomas Ruffin's father, Sterling, owned "Oakland Plantation." He purchased the land from Robert Williams in 1806. See *The Journal of Rockingham County History and Genealogy*, Volume II, Number 2, (October, 1977), 89.

¹⁴Rockingham Court Minutes, February, 1816.

¹⁵A copy of the Bethesda Presbyterian Church Record is located in the collection of the Rowan Public Library, Salisbury, North Carolina.

¹⁶Watt Family information came from the papers of the late Lawrence Watt and research by Robert Lee Watt, III. Many of the dates from tombstones in the Watt Family Cemetery.

¹⁷Rockingham Wills; Book B, 16.

¹⁸The Raleigh Register, November 12, 1829.

¹⁹The Watt Cemetery contains about 73 graves.

²⁰Rockingham Census records reveal that Pinkney Watt was born ca. 1814 or 1815.

²¹Virginia A. Dodd, Henry County, Virginia Marriage Bonds 1778-1849, (Richmond, Virginia: 1953), 129. Sallie was the daughter of Peter H. and Eliza W. Redd Dillard whose marriage bond in Henry County is dated May 29, 1819.

²²Rev. William Nelson Mebane (1809-1859) was installed as the first regular pastor of Spring Garden Presbyterian Church in Rockingham County in 1841. As pastor of Spring Garden, which was located between Madison and Leaksville, he held services in Madison, Leaksville and Cascade, Virginia.

²³Rockingham County Census, Slave Schedule, 1850.

²⁴Tradition from Hugh Jack Johnson, Reidsville, North Carolina, November 27, 1984.

²⁵Rockingham Court Minutes; 1849-1859.

²⁶John Gary Anderson, Autobiography, (Rock Hill, South Carolina: no printer named, 1936) 467. Hereinafter cited as Anderson, Autobiography. Penile Methodist Church at Lawsonville was organized in 1838 (Deed Book 2 dK, 108) and the school was located a short distance away. It is not known when the school was established.

²⁷The date 1858 was found by Si Rothrock while the house was being demolished in 1982.

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- ²⁸John Watt's old house was revealed when Pinkney Watt's house was torn down. John's house was one of the few in the county which contained brick nogging.
 - ²⁹Rockingham Census Records, Slave Schedule, 1860.
 - 30 Rockingham Court Minutes, 1861-1868.
 - ³¹Rockingham Deeds: Book 2 d R, 225. Palmer was Pinkney Watt's brother-in-law.
 - ³²Rockingham Court Minutes, August 1853.
 - 33 Anderson, Autobiography, 246, 447.
- ³⁴The Reidsville Review, November 22, 1978. Letter from Hugh Jack Johnson to the author dated September 30, 1984.
 - 35 Anderson, Autobiography, 469.
 - ³⁶Anderson, Autobiography, 73.
- ³⁷Rockingham Deeds: Book 3dH, 33; Book 3dG, 50. William Johnson was the great-grandfather of Hugh Jack Johnson of Reidsville.
 - ³⁸Rockingham Wills: Book E, 133.
 - ³⁹Stated by Hugh Jack Johnson.
 - ⁴⁰Rockingham Deeds: Book 4A, 343.
 - ⁴¹Conversation with Mrs. William C. Stokes November 14, 1984.
- ⁴²Watt Family information from the papers of the late Lawrence Watt and research by Robert Lee Watt III. Some family material also from *The Reidsville Review* and tombstones in the Watt Family Cemetery and Greenview Cemetery in Reidsville.
 - ⁴³Rockingham Deeds: Book 105, 192.
- 44A copy of the 1896 survey map was loaned to the author by Robert Lee Watt III who also supplied the present land owners' names.
 - ⁴⁵The Reidsville Review, January 21, 1902.
 - ⁴⁶The Reidsville Review August 12, 1902.
- ⁴⁷The tradition about the fire from Leon L. Trent April 11, 1980. Trent heard the story from R.P. Richardson, in 1961 or 1962 when he was overseer at the Watt Farm.
 - ⁴⁸The Reidsville Review, August 27, 1907.
 - ⁴⁹R.P. Richardson's tombstone, Greenview Cemetery, Reidsville.
 - ⁵⁰Letter from Hugh Jack Johnson to the author dated September 30, 1984.
 - ⁵¹Rockingham Deeds, Book 725, 999

A Brief History Of The Dalton Family And The Hunters Part Two

by Robert H. Dalton, M.D. 1805-1900

Notes by Linda C. Vernon and Charles D. Rodenbough

Robert Hunter Dalton was born February 21, 1805 on Beaver Island Creek in western Rockingham County, the son of Nicholas and Rachel Hunter Dalton. After completing medical school in Philadelphia he returned to Rockingham County to practice medicine. On January 6, 1832 he married Jane Martin Henderson and 1835 the family moved to Livington, Alabama. In 1845 the Daltons moved to Aberdeen, Mississippi where he practiced until 1867 except while serving as a doctor in the Confederate Army. Later after living in Missouri and California he spent his last years in Tacoma, Washington where he died in January, 1900 nearly 95 years of age.

The narrative was written in 1878 at the request of his daughter, Mary Lou Dalton Brodnax of Rockingham County. Part one of the manuscript was published in the December, 1984 issue of the journal. Part Two of the story begins with Dr. Dalton describing his mother, Rachel Hunter Dalton. The original manuscript is in the collection of the Missouri Historical Society. The grammar, spelling and punctuation of the manuscript has been retained.

Rachel Hunter, our mother was born Nov. 30, 1774, on Beaver Island Creek, one mile below the Dalton homestead. She was tall and well-proportioned, a graceful woman when in her prime, and always enjoyed excellent health. Her hair was a beautiful, dark auburn, and as fine as silk; skin fair and rosy, corresponding beautifully with her hair; eyes blue, grave and piercing; lips rather thin and mouth well cut, of ordinary size; chin broad but not very prominent; features symmetrical and comely, but well marked and expressive of firmness, emotion and great sincerity. In other words, she had a strong face. Though of Scotch-Irish family, she had no blarney. There was nothing in her character that bordered on deceit, nor

was she, in the least, inclined to jest. She was quick and sometimes irascible, but never violent or outbreaking; and when she was wounded in her feelings, she was apt to find relief in tears. Her heart was as tender as possible, and she was kind, benevolent and charitable to a fault. Her features always betrayed her emotions, and it was easy to know when her sensibility was disturbed. She was utterly devoted to domestic duties and her industry and rapid manipulations were remarkable.

Having so large a family and a lazy husband, as she used to call my father, she labored from break of day until late at night in keeping up the work of the household, and was always the last to retire for sleep; and though tolerant and indulgent, she managed to have everything done to suit herself, and without noise or excitement. She was never idle a moment while awake. Though very much devoted to her children, she was not as demonstrative in her affections and caresses as many others. She was exceedingly sensitive and modest. Life, with her, seemed to be a task, the labor of which was so pleasant and agreeable, she seldom sought any other recreation, for it was all recreation with her. Her happiness and contentment really consisted in her family, her own enjoyment being derived from the care and labor of rendering them comfortable and happy.

In early life she was not a member of any church, but for some years before her death she was a pious member of the Presbyterian Church. ⁷² On my way to join the Army at Harper's Ferry, Va., in the spring of 1861, I reached brother Nick's house at midnight ⁷³, where she was staying, and soon after gaining entrance into the house I asked for her and the room was pointed out. I ran in and found her just awakening from sleep, and as I approached she clasped me in her arms, and kissing me for a moment, exclaimed 'Oh, this is my child - my child gone so long? No, it can't be. Yes, it must be so, and how is it? I'm dreaming. No, speak my child and let me hear your voice." Though light was in the room by this time she passed her hand over my face several times as though she wished to feel as well as see my features. She then sobbed and wept and began to pet me as though I had been a child and holding me a little distance from her face, and looking straight at me, she said "Oh, Bob, it took a war to bring you to me; God bless the war."

I left her to dress while I was talking to the family in the next room, and when she came up she was silent, and gazed at me earnestly for some time, seeming to be almost stupified and not able to realize my presence. As I was then several days behind my orders, I had to leave Madison the next afternoon, by 2 o'clock, messengers were sent forthwith to notify the kin for miles around, and by 7 o'clock a.m. they began to arrive. And such a scene! Poor sister Nancy fainted as I met her, and remained unconscious for some time, and I really feared she would die. By 9 o'clock they were all in, with a

number of my friends of Auld Lang Syne, none of whom had I seen for 28 years. It was the most joyful day of my life. At dinner I sat beside my mother and observed that she partook of substantial food, though she was then 87 years old. At the table she was quite cheerful and told me the notorious anecdote relating to the destruction of my crop of tobacco by an old sow when I was a small boy; and she described my agony and raving when I came to the house and was informed of the great calamity and concluded by saying "and Bob said he would never work again; and he never did."

When the time approached for me to leave a gloom seemed to settle over her countenence and when I embraced her to go, she was silent and motionless as a statute, but exhibited features of agony that I can never forget. From the time of my leaving her in 1835, she had fallen in height several inches, and seemed to be greatly reduced in size; but yet she had easy use of her limbs and walked well. Her mind was little impaired. At 2 o' clock I left and never beheld my mother again. Sometime that year she fell and fractured her thigh in the hip joint and her health declined for the want of exercise. She died in 1863, aged 89 years. 74

And now to conclude this notice, of the Dalton family, I have to speak of myself - a subject by no means pleasant for me to discuss; but it would be incomplete without some allusion to my life, I will give a simple outline of it.

Robert Hunter Dalton

The writer was born February 21, 1805. My name in the old family register being mutilated, it has always been doubtful whether the date was 1805 or 1806; but brother Samuel was of the opinion it was 1805, in which he would seem to be substained by the wide gap which would be between the ages of brother Lee and myself, if 1806 is correct. But as the figure 5 has no dash, and I made it when only 11 years old for the purpose of gaining a year, it is impossible to decide the matter, as though the figure without the dash was a fair 6, yet my father may have failed to make it.

Being the 7th child of a family of 13 children, I was much crowded and it may be supposed that I had a poor chance; but such was not the case, for as far back as I can remember I clamored for my rights and if anything good was at hand, I was apt to get my share. I never regarded myself as a favorite child so far as my father and mother were concerned; and yet I am sure that I was the pet of my sisters. Prior to the age of six I doubtless encountered many startling incidents in slips and diapers, in the kitchen, in the house and in the yard as well as the fields, some of which I now well remember; but the 6th year was the first real epoch of my life, that being the age that I first

learned to chew tobacco and was entered at school. At that time Ewel, Lee and myself began to walk 21/2 miles to a school on Henderson branch south of my father's where Col. Henderson (the gg Granduncle of my children had lived before he moved to Tennessee long before I was born). 75 The old house was still standing. The school was taught by Thomas Piner, a routine Methodist preacher, whose head was red, the very looks of whom, when I first entered the school room was near throwing me into fits; but he proved to be kind to me during three years pupilage there. Our grandfather Hunter presented us each with a new Testament, and our first reading was in that. which I have often regretted, as it was not only hard to read, but gave us a horror of the Holy book for many years afterward. It was a long and fatiguing walk for one so young, and the path being full of grubs and stones, the end of my second toe was off, generally, all of the summer. My progress must have been very slow at that school, for after three years I was able only to read and write indifferently. Mr. Piner having gone to Indiana, we were sent two miles north east to an old pedagogue 72 years old, whose name was Nehemiah Vernon. 76 He was tall, stooped and very lean, his face wearing a perpetual sardonic grin. He was the (first) real Orge I ever saw, and if I were a painter I could draw an exact likeness of him, so indelible was the impression he made on me. He never laughed in his life; I suppose because he was so grim. I was so shy of him that he never had a chance to strike me but once and then when I had my arm around the beautiful Miss Deatheridge, 77 as we were sitting at the large writing desk. The first I knew of it was when a long hickory switch had struck across my back and was wrapped up rightly around me. After a year or two he was succeeded by Samuel Lewellyn, 78 one of his pupils, who assayed to teach me arithmetic for one year. I was then about 12 years old, and stayed at home for about a year, spending part of my time at my grandfather's with my cousin, James Hunter, orphan son of Dr. Robert Hunter,79 and sometimes riding on errands for our family. During that time I read religious books and others which I found in my grandfather's fine library, which laid the foundation of a strong religious sentiment, which I never lost, and inspired me with a fondness for books, which may have led to my subsequent education. About this time, an accomplished young man, Dr. John Robertson⁸⁰ from Virginia, opened a grammar school on my father's land in an old overseer's house, and sister Nancy, some of the smaller children and myself, were entered. My darling sister and myself were classed in grammar and geography, and it was all I could do to keep up with her. We progressed very rapidly and were the teacher's pets.

At this period, (the) town of Madison⁸¹ had been laid off and an academy built and in operation under the charge of Mr. Samuel Smith,⁸² and eminent teacher. My father had been down to a trustee meeting, being a trustee, and

had been prevailed upon to prescribe a scholar, and Ewel, of course, was to be the choice; but he protested so throughly against that, as a last resort, I had to fill the place, for someone had to comply with the engagement, so, on the first Monday in February 1821, I started, riding to school in Madison which was seven miles distant, and continued to go for three years, lacking one month, during which time I became a fine Latin and Greek scholar. The school was very large and many of the students were of the best family in the country, among whom I became emulous and carried off first honors at examinations, which were always crowded with first class visitors. On one occasion, "the first examination" in my class of ll in number, I obtained the first honor, and very unexpectedly when all the honors had been read to the assemblage, Judge Thomas Lacy, ⁸³ one of the committee of examinations, rose and read out a most complimentary honor in my favor over the whole school. And it was true that I had made remarkable progress.

At the end of three years, when many of my companions were going to enter college at Chapel Hill, I besought my father to let me go too; but he was unwilling to bear the expense; so I was at the end of my row, but not of education. It so happened that four of my second cousins from Western Patrick and Surry counties, had been boarding and going to school at Madison, three Moore's and one Carter, all near my age. These had spoke so highly to their parents of me, that at that time I received a pressing invitation to come up and take a school at Mount Airy at a salary of \$200 and board for one year. I seized the opportunity and opened the school of 42 scholars on the first Monday in January, 1824; many of my scholars were much older that I was; but they behaved very respectfully to me, and I had a very agreeable time, and with very hard study and application for one year and one-half. I engaged for the second year for the sum of \$300 but begged off at the end of the third session to engage in the study of medicine, which then was much more honorable profession than it is now, and fully equal to that of law and theology. But when I began to teach, I had with me a number of elementary law books obtained from Cousin Mathew Moore⁸⁵ of Stokes. then an eminent lawyer, which I studied at nights and Sundays, during the first year of my teaching, with a view of making an early start in the practice of law, after my term of teaching was out. But hard study in reading these books at night, and reviewing before my classes, impaired my health, so that my mind became turned to the choice of medicine, so that I might preserve my own health, I so calculated.

I went at once to study medicine with Dr. Wm. Hereford, ⁸⁶ of Leatherwood, Henry County, Va., in company with my cousin, Leander Hughes ⁸⁷ who had returned from Chapel Hill, and James Inge of Pittsylvania, where he remained only four months, during which time we not only studied hard, but had an opportunity of seeing and associating with the

young ladies whom we met every week at social dinings, given every week, first at one house, then at another. They were elite, and many of them descendents of Patrick Henry. And near close of my term there, I had the pleasure of attending a campmeeting on Horse Pasture, near the residence of Gen. John Dillard. 88 who married a daughter of Aunt Hughes, and when I first beheld the lovely creature who was to be the partner of the best part of my life, 89 and the mother of all my children -- a blushing beauty of? years. She had come up from New Bern, the metropolis then of North Carolina, to spend the summer with her relatives at Snow Creek, 90 and, in company with her cousin, Edmund, Bettie and Martha Martin, 91 and Ruth Rogers, 92 with her beau, Alex Dearing, who married her, she was the guest of Mrs. Gen. Dillard. Dearing introduced her to me awkwardly on the camp ground by saving "Let me introduce you to cousin Robert --" I saluted and bowed as much like Col. Sam Hughes⁹³ as I could, and quickly after recognizing me, she turned to Bettie Martin and blushing said something in a low tone. As soon as I had an opportunity I asked Bettie what she said, learned that it was "Oh, I dreamed about that young man last night."

It is no poetry to say that she was as fair as a lily, for she was really so, and every feature was charm by itself. Of course, I was deeply smitten, having spent nearly a week in her presence, and though she treated me with respect. I was never aware that I had made an impression on her until 6 years afterwards, when we were married, and then she declared she had dreamed about me, and when she was suddenly introduced to me the shock embarrassed her and she asked who I was and told Bettie of the dream. But I saw her no more, and really tried to forget her supposing she was soon to be a belle in a fashionable city far away and beyond my reach -- the daughter of a banker while I was only a poor student of dry bones. But I could not forget her. That beautiful head of dark waiving hair; those deep-set, dark, lustrous, blue eyes; those smiling vermillion lips, tender and sweet as a budding rose; that lily-fresh complection reflecting the charms of virgin purity; those peaceful attitudes and notions; those were stamped indelibly upon my mind. I returned to Leatherwood, weighing more than ever under the sense of humble position and resolved to elevate myself if labor could accomplish it.

Nov. 1825 found me at my father's house not knowing what to do nor where to go. But in a few days I received a kind invitation from Dr. Edward T. Broadnax of Saura Town⁹⁴ to come to his house and study medicine free of charge, which I promptly did. The residence was beautiful and picturesque, overlooking the Dan, with its wide and extensive low grounds and much of the surrounding country. There was a fine library and I made good use of it until next fall when I went to the lectures at Transylvania, 95 which was then a first class school. My father held the notes for \$350 on my

school employer, in Surry which had not yet been paid, and furnished me with a fine horse and \$200, which carried me through on (a) course of lectures and brought me home. My employers who gave the notes were Mr. Slade, Gallihue Moore, Wm. McGraw and Mechak Franklin, The money I had was currency, not current in Lexington, Ky, and my father instructed me to change it at the bank in Rogerville, Tenn. for silver, which I did, and on the way, at Renfro's, in Kentucky, where I stayed all night, a thief robbed the saddle bags of two horse drivers who staved there that night, and came very near getting all of my money. Next morning, when the men were frustrated by the robbery, I flew to my saddle bags, which I found still locked, but the leather strap which interlocked the edges pulled up so that they had had their hands down in among my clothes; but they had not reached the Mexican dollars rolled up and at the bottom. I have often thought of this morning's escape from ruin... I found Dudly, Drake and Caldwell lecturing there; and soon after taking my room upstairs in the boarding house, my dear cousin and old classmate, Leander Hughes, had arrived from Tennessee, where his father, Col. John Hughes has settled, and came rushing up the steps and flew into my arms. I had not seen him since we parted in Leatherwood in 1825, this being the fall of 1826. He was a gifted scholar and young orator of the academy, my classmate and my rival for distinction. We roomed together during the winter, and we rivalled one another again. But my poor dear friend and cousin, though he remained there until he graduated, he died before he practiced and death never claimed a nobler victim. I, too, expected to stay there for graduation, and my father had written, promising to send me money; but I never received his letter, and finding myself almost out of money, at the close of the session, I mounted my fine horse, Charlie, and returned to my father's.

I should have gone back at once, but my cousin, Dr. James Hunter⁹⁷ of Guilford, was at the time about to leave his location, at the Big Oak, now Hillsdale, to remove to Tennessee, and I decided to take his place till fall, and then return to graduate; but falling into a fine practice, I held the position for three and one-half years - and then closed up and went to Philadelphia where I graduated. One of my friends and admirers, Maj. Mason Wall, ⁹⁸ a merchant near Madison, loaned me, without solicitation, the money, \$400, to buy books, instruments and a little stock of medicine to begin with and he purchased them at Philadelphia when he was there buying his goods. I paid the debt and interest the next year.

The country being poor, I made no great deal of money but enough to keep me dressed very finely and enable me to sport fine horses and sulkeys while there I became engaged to Miss Alphia Taylor, rich heiress of Chatham, whose father had been a leading man in that country, and throughout the state; but quarreling with her mother when I asked for her, I

quit in disgust when she urged that I was not a graduate and was trying to marry her daughter for money, and went immediately to Philadelphia where I did graduate and afterwards marry a woman far superior. I was very busy during those three and one-half years and performed several capitol operations in surgery, some of which I had never seen performed by others. I declined no professional responsibility, though I was not a graduate.

At Philadelphia I remained six months. Sometime after the course was completed, attending the Alms House and studying in the Great Wistar Museum, 99 I heard the last lectures of the celebrated Drs. Physick 100 and James, and their names are on my diploma. While there I was the classmate and intimate associate of the celebrated Arctic voyager, Dr. Kane, 101 a small eccentric, learned man with whom I visited some charming French ladies on Spruce St. several times: also a strong intimacy with the new celebrated Matter Bernard, the young millionaire of Savannah who insisted upon furnishing me with the means of taking a curriculum in Paris where they were then about to accomplish themselves in their profession, but I, like a sensitive simpleton, declined the obligation, and after equipping myself with a \$100 suit from Watkins and Shellerine and a fine set of surgical instruments from Doser's, I returned to my father's. But before I left I had formed a co-partnership with a fellow graduate, Dr. Wharton of Virginia, a most talented young man, with the prospect of settling together in St. Louis, Mo, in the following November, where we were to make money for the purpose of taking a course in Paris, which plan failed for a reason to be explained later. St. Louis was then a village of 10,000 persons.

Returning from Philadelphia, and settling in my old business for the means of complying with this arrangement, I had formed a temporary copartnership with Dr. Currie¹⁰² of Madison until the time to go should arrive. But riding up to Currie's house, after a trip to Surry County, I was told that Miss Henderson was at the house to dine with the family, in company with her brother. I knew nothing of this Henderson having left New Bern and settling in Mt. Pleasant, 103 and really did not suspect who the Miss Henderson was. But after brushing off the dust, we all walked to the house, and Mrs. Currie introduced me to Miss Jane Henderson. I was dazed and confounded, realizing at once that she was the same beautiful, budding flower I had seen in its freshness 6 years earlier. And now the holy passion which had slumbered so long in despair, was kindled up like lightening in my ear, and there it is as I am writing these lines. Suffice it to say that I soon made my passion known, and at the moment of our engagement, we went together like children. She had remembered me and heard of my success and accepted Mrs. Currie's invitation that she might see me again.

We were married on Old Christmas Day, Jan. 6, 1832 at 3 o'clock p.m. at Mt. Pleasant, and soon settled in Madison where I was engaged in a large

practice until December 1834, when we broke up and remained at Mt. Pleasant, with our little son, Alexander, until the following March, when, in company with my brother-in-law, J.W. Chambers¹⁰⁴ and his family who were going to Tennessee, I started to Alabama by way of Tennessee, the Creek Indians being hostile on the direct route. During the sojourn at Mt. Pleasant, which was then the hospitable roof for the fine people of all the country where much entertained, the time was spent most agreeably and pleasantly in the delightful society of the queenly Mrs. Henderson, and her dear, precious, lovely daughters, Sarah and Eliza, who charmed me with music, and all the family of Maj. Chambers who was in Halifax arranging his affairs to leave the country. That short period is one of the brightest spots in my calendar. My wife was not a situation to travel, and I went on horseback and was much exhausted by the long and weary trip.

Having business for Mr. Henderson in his new plantation in Sumter County, 105 I was detained there for several weeks until it was too late to risk myself in Mobile, where it was my purpose to settle, in the hot weather. where yellow fever prevailed, and hence stopped, temporarily, as I thought, at Livingston, 106 but falling into a very large practice at once, I stayed there for ten years; coining money all the time, but losing it again by securityship; as was incident, in those flush times of Alabama to almost everybody. But yet I came off well with enough to settle my family in Aberdeen, Miss. the first of 1845. While living at Livingston, my children Luisa, Robert who died at Capt, Wallace's on Hunterbish, and Jane who died in Aberdeen in 1845 and William were all born, Hamilton having been born at Mt. Pleasant in the spring of 1835, and brought in the fall with his mother and Alexander by William Henderson. And while we were there my wife built a beautiful Episcopal church which stands there now as a monument to her memory. She raised contributions by subscriptions there, where no Episcopalians lived but herself, and obtained donations from liberal persons whom she knew, and some whom she did not know, from all parts of the country. She took up out of our vard a beautiful minesa tree and planted it in the church yard, before the door, where I learned it is still flourishing. At one period of the time I thought she was far-gone in consumption, her mother and one of her sisters having died with that disease, but she was fortunatley saved by adopting the habit of taking a sponge or towel cold bath or friction, every morning, which she continued throughout her life, and soon grew to be a large, healthy, fleshy woman, and even more comely the larger she grew.

In January 1845, I removed to Aberdeen, Miss. 107 where I remained til the last of April 1867, struggling for 20 years under the impress of all the elements of misfortune which could afflict a man, the end of which was the loss of my wife, the mother of my dear children, on the very day, to the hour which we had been united in matrimony 20 years before. My life had been

one of arduous labor, and though I suffered much and seen great troubles, I have enjoyed much in this beautiful world, where the pleasures are though, the charms that greet the eye, and all the social and domestic associations, comprise, in my estimation a Heaven on Earth.

And now in conclusion of this imperfect view of my past life, I may be permitted to say that, though I have failed to achieve as much success as I once expected, yet I have done my full part in contributing to the comfort and happiness for all whom I have ever been responsible.

And here I had dropped the curtain to raise no more in view of my life; but a few more words may not be our of place to throw some light on what has happened to my career. When I lost my wife in 1853 I was prosperous and in possession of a fine estate, and engaged in a profitable practice; but it soon appeared that fate was unpropitious. The wand of Ethuriel had dropped from my hand and Fortune smiled no more. The balance wheel which held in poise the plan of my affairs was gone; and though under the guidance of a darling, brilliant child, my mansion for years was the focus of fashion and the scene of all the joys of youthful life. I admired and approved but failed to participate. I struggled to restore equilibrium by business and enterprize, but misfortune came. At one full swoop \$14,000 were swept away by the burning of my steam saw-mill, and \$4,000 had to be expended in buying another to saw up a vast number of socks rafted up the river 20 miles during the preceding summer. But after all I held my own until the beginning of the war in 1861. In the meantime I had deemed it wise to marry again, and did select the most gifted and charming woman in the South for my companion, but the act proved the greatest blunder of my life. With all my exertions, there was a separation. Nature cried aloud in condemnation of the measure, and there was no help. I fled to the war at the age of 56, camped and slept for a year in the forest and fields of Virginia and mingled with scenes of sickness, bloodshed and courage. And then in control of a vast hospital, I labored nearly incessantly through the war; but yet, there was no relief, and when I returned to my home in 1864, I found my condition still the same even worse. And then after two years of futile preparation I determined to escape from the scene of my troubles and plunge into a vast city where I might find a field commensurate with my large experience and recover all that had been lost. And so I likely to do, had I been sustained at home. I remained 8 years at St. Louis, 108 and just as I had taken a commanding position, as I thought, and began to be remarked for my perseverance, I fell from a street-car and fractured my hip joint as my mother had done; and there ended my business and domestic career, on the dissolution of which I had nothing to say, but drifted under the protection of my younger sons, who have heaped upon me all the kindness and attention fillial love could inspire. I fully recovered from the terrible injuries and am

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now here with my son Clay, in South West Missouri, after spending two and one-half years with my son, Robert Hunter, in the elysian climate of Southern California in distant view of the boundless Pacific. And the future -- I know not what is in it for me. 109

To Be Continued

Notes

⁷²The Hunters came from a strong Presbyterian background in Ireland and America. She was not a member of a Presbyterian church until late in life because there was no organized Presbyterian church in the neighborhood until about 1835.

⁷³Nicholas Dalton's home still stand of the north side of Murphy Street between Franklin and Wall Streets in Madison.

⁷⁴Rachel Hunter Dalton died August 23, 1863 and was buried in the family cemetery

overlooking the James Hunter homeplace.

⁷⁵Samuel Henderson, who had helped extend the survey of the boundary between Virginia, North Carolina and Tennessee, had been associated with his brother Richard in the Transylvania Company. He was an original settler with Daniel Boone at Boonesborough, Kentucky and returned to North Carolina about 1782. He settled in western Rockingham County on what came to be Henderson's branch. In 1786 he was appointed colonel of the county militia. Around 1800 he moved his family to Tennessee and died in 1816 in Warren County. See Alice Barnwell Keith, (ed.) *The John Gray Blount Papers*, (Raleigh, State Department of Archives and History, 1952), I, 28.

⁷⁶Nehemiah Vernon, son of Isaac and Elizabeth Austin Vernon, was born about 1743 and died 1828. The Vernons settled along the Mayo River about 1770. The Vernon brothers had credits for land by virtue of their service in the Indian Wars. Nehemiah's wife was Mary, probably the daughter of Obediah Claybrook.

⁷⁷Probably one of the grandchildren of Philemon and Elizabeth Deathridge. The Deathridge land was on both sides of the Mayo River joining that of Alexander Joyce, sr. See Early Families of the North Carolina Counties of Rockingham and Stokes with Revolutionary Service. (Madison, N.C., James Hunter Chapter DAR, 1981) II, 34.

⁷⁸Possibly the Samuel Lewellyn who settled on the north side of the road from Mayo ford to Spring Garden. He was born October 6, 1797 and died in 1854. On January 27, 1819 he

married Mary Lybas.

⁷⁹Dr. Robert Hunter was born June 16, 1782 and died as a result of a hunting accident March 13, 1812. He married his cousin Fannie Martin, daughter of James Martin, January 23, 1809 in Stokes County, North Carolina. They were the parents of two children.

⁸⁰It is not known how many years Dr. Robertson taught at this school. One Dr. Robertson is listed in the 1820 Federal Census but appears to be over 45 years old with several older adults

in the household.

⁸¹In 1815 the North Carolina Legislature chartered the establishment of a town by the name of Madison at the confluence of the Dan and Mayo Rivers. In the summer of 1818 Randal Duke Scales had 96 lots laid off in a square on his land and the first lots were sold by auction.

82 Samuel Smith (1799-1844) established Shady Grove Academy on his land on the Mayo

River north of Madison. Today the site is near the limits of the town of Mayodan.

⁸³Here Dalton is almost certainly referring to Theophilus Lacy, Jr. (1765-1831) who was born in Halifax County, Virginia and died in Morgan County, Alabama. For an extended period he lived in Rockingham County on the south side of the Dan River across from the town of Madison. He was a Justice of the Peace, an active Federalist and a friend of Dalton's grandfather, James Hunter.

84Possibly the children of Samuel Moore, the oldest child of Dalton's great-aunt, Letitia Dalton, wife of Matthew Moore. Samuel married Elizabeth Gaines, sister of General Edmund

P. Gaines and they settled in Surry County.

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⁸⁵Matthew Redd Moore was born September 8, 1792 and died in 1877 in Georgia. He was the youngest son of Letitia Dalton and Matthew Moore. He was Clerk of Court in Stokes County and a member of the North Carolina Legislature. He married Maria McKenzie January 31, 1822. She was born June 16, 1803 and died October 5, 1888 in Alabama.

⁸⁶Dr. William Hereford purchased land on the Smith River in Henry County, Virginia in 1804 from General Joseph Martin and wife, Susannah. In 1806 he was appointed a Justice of

the Peace in that county and resided in Leatherwood community.

⁸⁷Leander Hughes, son of Dalton's great-aunt Mary Dalton and Archelous Hughes of Patrick County, Virginia, was a student at the University of North Carolina in 1823.

88 John Dillard married Matilda Hughes.

⁸⁹Jane Martin Henderson was the daughter of Colonel Alexander Henderson who was son of Thomas Henderson, brother-in-law of Governor Alexander Martin. She was named for her grandmother, Jane Martin.

⁹⁰The Snow Creek plantation was the home of James Martin, brother of Governor Alexander Martin. James Martin lived until 1834 and was the patriarch of a large family.

⁹¹Edmund Loftin Martin, Elizabeth Elbridge Martin and Martha Ann Martin were three of the younger children of James Martin of Snow Creek by his second wife, Martha Jones. Ruth M. Rogers was the daughter of Mary (Polly) Martin, an older daughter of James Martin, and her husband. Thomas Rogers.

 $\rm ^{92}Ruth$ M. Rogers married Alexander Dearing on October 13, 1824 in Stokes County, North Carolina.

⁹³One of the sons of Archelous Hughes and Mary Dalton.

⁹⁴Dr. Edward T. Brodnax had a plantation south of the Dan River below Leaksville.

⁹⁵Transylvania College at Lexington, Kentucky opened its medical school in 1817.

⁹⁶Benjamin W. Dudley, M.D. taught anatomy and surgery and Daniel Drake, M.D. taught materia medica on the original faculty. In the 1819/1820 session Charles Caldwell, M.D. came from Philadelphia as dean and professor of the institutes and materia medica. Caldwell had a poor opinion of the original faculty, writing, "I had under my direction one of the most miserable Faculties of Medicine...that the Caucasian portion of the human family can well furnish, or the human mind easily imagine." See John H. Ellis Medicine in Kentucky, (The University Press of Kentucky, 1977), 9-11.

⁹⁷James A. Hunter was born October 9, 1801, the son of Samuel G. and Rebecca Bruce Hunter. He married Susan Martin, a granddaughter of Colonel James Martin of Snow Creek.

He died April 12, 1862 in Nacogdoches County, Texas.

⁹⁸Major William Mason Wall was a merchant who lived south of Dan River. His brother, Robert Zachary Wall, was a doctor. In the mid-1830s' Mason Wall was the first of his family to leave the area and settle in Henry County, Missouri. He was followed by many relatives.

⁹⁹Caspar Wistar, M.D. (1761-1818) was a renowned Philadelphia physician.

100 Philip Syng Physick (1768-1837).

¹⁰¹Elisha Kent Kane (1820-1857) American scientist and explorer.

¹⁰²Dr. James Currie (1796-1855) married Mary Ann Wright. In 1832 the Curries moved to the Piney Creek area near Speedwell Church and lived there for the remainder of their lives.

¹⁰³The Henderson's family first acquired land which became part of the Mt. Pleasant tract by a grant in 1783 to Thomas Henderson. Alexander Henderson, Dalton's father-in-law acquired the 1707 acres, for the first time designated Mt. Pleasant, from Major Pleasant Henderson in 1816. In 1841 he lost Mt. Pleasant and the adjoining Danbury tract in a foreclosure by the Bank of North Carolina. Alexander Henderson had moved his family to Mobile, Alabama before 1840 and the original house at Mt. Pleasant soon burned.

104 Joseph W. Chalmers was married to Jane Henderson's sister. In 1835 they spent a period of time at Mt. Pleasant while they were in the process of a move from their home in Virginia to

A Brief History of the Dalton Family and the Hunters, Part Two

Tennessee. While there, the Chalmers' son, Hamilton Henderson Chalmers was born. In 1839 the family moved to Holly Springs, Mississippi. See Dunbar Rowland, Courts, Judges and Lawyers of Mississippi 1798-1935 (Press of Hederman Bros., Jackson, Mississippi, 1935), 111.

105 Sumpter County, Alabama on the border of Mississippi. Dalton appears to be referring to his father-in-law, Alexander Henderson, but he could mean Alexander's brother, Colonel Thomas Henderson, the former editor of the *Raleigh Star*. Thomas migrated from Rockingham County to Madison County, Tennessee and in 1835 to Sumpter County. He died there at age 50 on June 22, 1836. See *Voice of Sumpter*, 28 June, 1836.

106 Livingston, Alabama in Sumpter County.

107. Dr. Robert Dalton came here (Aberdeen) from North Carolina and was for many years one of our most esteemed citizens. Both as physicians and gentlemen, he was recognized as beyond reproach." See Reuben Davis, Recollections of Mississippi and Mississippians, (University and College Press of Mississippi, 1972), 267.

108 Dalton wrote a letter to Judge E.G. Hunter in 1897 stating that he moved to St. Louis in

1867.

¹⁰⁹ Dalton's last years were spent in Tacoma, Washington with his daughter, Mrs. Alexander Smith. He died there in January, 1900, almost 95 years old. See Walter Marvin Hunter, The Hunters of Bedford County, Virginia (Polyanthas, Cottonport, Louisiana, 1973), 66-67.



The Rockingham County Historical Society, Inc.

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The Journal of Rockingham County History and Genealogy



The Rockingham County Historical Society, Inc.

The Journal of Rockingham County History and Genealogy

The journal is published semiannually in June and December by the Rockingham County Historical Society, Box 84, Wentworth, N.C. 27375. Members of the society, for which the annual dues are \$8.00 for an individual and \$12.00 for a family membership, receive the journal. Single issues may be purchased for \$3.50 per number plus 50 cents mailing charge.

Editorial Policy

The publication committee is interested in receiving articles on the history and genealogical source materials of Rockingham County and the adjacent area. The historical articles must be well written and thoroughly documented. Genealogical articles should consist of previously unpublished primary source materials pertaining to Rockingham County, such as abstracts of local records and edited diaries, letters, or church records. Papers on family history should not be submitted. All copy, including footnotes, should be typed double-space. Articles and correspondence should be sent to the editor: Robert W. Carter, Jr., Route 2 Box 392, Reidsville, N.C. 27320

Cover Illustration

Rockingham County was formed December 29. 1785 thus making this the county's Bicentennial year. The illustration on the journal cover is the official logo of the Rockingham County Bicentennial Commission.

The Journal of Rockingham County History and Genealogy

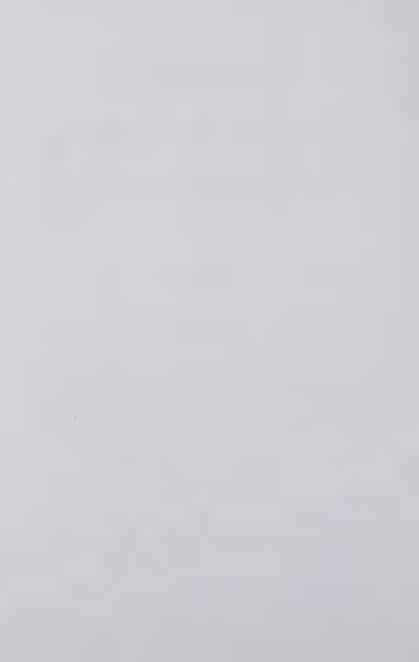
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1985 Bicentennial Addresses

by Lindley S. Butler and Lucy M. Rankin

Editor's note: Rockingham County was formed on December 29, 1785 from the northern portion of Guilford County by an act of the North Carolina General Assembly. On January 7, 1985 the Rockingham County Commissioners appointed a Bicentennial Commission to plan various activities to be held throughout the year in celebration of the county's 200th birthday.

The commission selected October 20th to October 27th as Bicentennial Week to coincide with the visit of Commander Michael Saunders-Watson, a collateral descendant of Charles Watson-Wentworth, Marquess of Rockingham for whom the County was named. The commission selected Saturday, October 26, for a "Salute to Rockingham County." The salute was held at the Redisville Senior High School Stadium with Lindley S. Butler, Historian in Residence at Rockingham Commmunity College, delivering the major address.

On Sunday, October 27, the Bicentennial Week activities came to a close with the dedication of a peace plaque at Speedwell Presbyterian Church. As part of the dedication, Lucy M. Rankin church historian at Speedwell, delivered an address concerning the Revolutionary War traditions which surround the church.

It seems appropriate that the members of the society who were unable to attend the events should have a copy of each of the addresses. As part of the Bicentennial Celebration both speeches are published in full in this edition of the Journal

"A SALUTE TO ROCKINGHAM COUNTY" October 26th, 1985

Paratroopers Ascend 82nd Airborne Division-Fort Bragg

Review - Rockingham County's 4 high school marching bands

Paratroopers Drop

Welcome and Invocation

Rev. Reid Montgomery, Pastor, Speedwell Presbyterian Church

Introduction of Guests

J.B. Balsley, Jr., Chairman, Bicentennial Commission

Response

Jake Alexander, Governor Martin's Deputy Assistant Secretary

Introduction of British Visitors

J.B. Balsley, Jr.

Response

Commander Michael Saunders-Watson

Music

Combined chorus, Reidsville Senior-Junior High School Mrs. Gwendelyn Bell, Choral Director

Introduction of Speaker

J.B. Balsley, Jr.

Address

Lindley Butler, Historian in Residence, RCC

Great Britian's National Anthem

America's National Anthem

Benediction

Rev. Reid Montgomery

Rockingham County: A Bicentennial Address

Lindley S. Butler October 26, 1985

Two hundred years ago on December 29, 1785, the North Carolina General Assembly created a new county from the northern half of Guilford County. The new county was named Rockingham for Charles Watson-Wentworth, the second Marquess of Rockingham and the county seat, Rockingham Courthouse, became Wentworth in 1798. I hope by now everyone here knows why the Revolutionary generation, just two years after the war ended, chose to name a county and two towns in North Carolina for an English nobleman. This man, twice prime minister and leader of the Whig party, had supported the American colonies before and during the war and helped bring the war to a close, thereby making our independence possible. His family connections--the Wentworths, the Watsons, and the Fitzwilliams--were for their age progressive thinkers and men of vision.

To honor the second Marquess and his vision of our future and to remind us of our English heritage, we invited and you have met the present owners of Rockingham Castle, Northamptonshire, England. I hope that all of you will get to know them as I have--to experience their bright warmth, their openness, their enthusiasm. They are exemplary representatives of so much of the best from the United Kingdom. May the friendship we have established this weekend grow into a permanent relationship that will be a constant reminder to us of our British origin.

There is so much that we owe the United Kingdom--our language, culture, history, tradition, law, constitution, our concept of individual rights. Even the famed Southern biscuit has its roots in the scone. The Declaration of Independence, an American document, could not have been written without the long centuries of evolution of the English constitution which involved participation in local and national government. But those who left the British Isles for the colonies felt stifled and hemmed in and sought economic and social opportunity through the acquisition of land and the erection of a freer and more open society.

We are, for the most part, knowledgeable of our British constitutional

heritage, but there are other aspects of their historical experience with which we are not so familiar. The British, being on an island, were very early in their history faced with the fact that they had limited land and resources. They had to learn stewardship--to manage properly the land and its resources with regard for the rights of others. As the population expanded, they lost living space--or as we say it here, elbow room. They learned to live on small plots of ground, to cultivate the earth to produce the most that it could with regard for the future so that their children and grandchildren would also be able to live on the land. We found at Rockingham Castle this past June a strong sense of stewardship, ecological awareness, and management and planning for the future.

When our British ancestors stepped ashore in the colonies and were confronted with seemingly inexhaustable land, space, forest, and resources--they feasted; they gorged. They learned wasteful habits, forgetting their hard earned concept of stewardwhip. They did build on the foundation of a richly endowed land a great nation, but a nation that stands today at a crossroads. We are a nation that has been in this century painfully groping for stewardship. We progressed through the conservation movement, learning that our resources are limited, to the ecological awareness that we share this planet with all living things, that endangering one form of life may jeopardize all forms. Our county, in the past two centuries, in this nearly six hundred square miles of beautiful, rolling, Piedmont foot hill country has reflected this historical experience.

We are gathered here today to remember not only our English heritage, but especially to remember the contributions of the tens of thousands of men and women who have made our county what it is today. We glimpse the Saura Indians, the sturdy pioneer folk--English, Scots-Irish, Scots, and Welsh--drifting into the Carolina backcountry from Virginia, Maryland, and Pennsylvania--the Africans brought here against their will through the West Indies and other colonies. Many of you here today bear the names of families that have lived on this land more than two hundred years. These early settlers were God fearing Presbyterians, Primitive Baptists, and later Methodists and Episcopalians. Today, nearly every Christian denomination is represented in the county.

The pioneers found a rich land described so well by our first explorer, William Byrd, in 1733 as the Land of Eden. Byrd wrote that

It must have been a great misfortune to them (the Saura Indians) to be obliged to abandon so beautiful a dwelling, where the air is wholesome and the soil equal in fertility to any in the world. The river is about eighty yards wide, always confined within its lofty banks and rolling down its waters, as

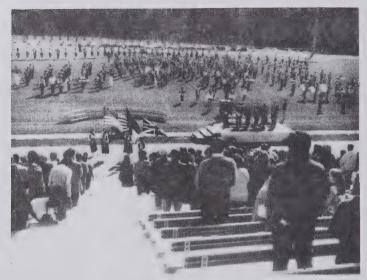
Rockingham County: A Bicentennial Address

sweet as milk and as clear as crystal. There runs a charming level of more than a mile square that will bring forth like the lands of Egypt, without being overflowed once a year. There is scare a shrub in view to intercept your prospect but grass as high as a man on horseback... and I could not quit this pleasant situation without regret but often faced about to take a parting look at it as far as I could see, and so indeed did all the rest of the company. (Byrd, Journey to the Land of Eden, 1733)

They settled on this rich land and used it to build a prosperous, comfortable society with large plantations in the river valley and smaller upland tobacco farms. Their descendants today sprawl across the county in crossroad villages, small towns and cities. Despite two centuries of cultivation, we have more that half our land in forest--both hardwood and pine. We have adequate game, and a bounty of wild plants and flowers adorns the woodlands. Our more than 85,000 citizens have an abundance of green space--elbow room--and we enjoy a pleasant life style geared to country and small towns that our neighbors living in metropolitan urban centers envy and for sometime have been moving here to enjoy. But as we develop--if we continue to grow with no plan for the future, this pleasant life style may evaporate in the next century. We simply cannot afford to put individual interests above the interests of the whole community if we want to preserve what we have now. At the same time we must go forward economically if we are to prosper.

All social life is tied to community, and a sense of community gives meaning to life. The community may be as small as a family or as large as the world. In our evolution of the community, we have in the human experience broadened our vision from the individual to the whole family of man. A sense of community, neighborhood, and neighborliness has been and is a strength of our county. We help each other in a time of need and we care for each other in a time of tragedy. We often work and play well together, but our present community concept is too narrow for the next century.

Two hundred years ago the individual and his neighbor were enough. In the past century, towns were the dominant force of our life. For the next century, we must capture a county-wide vision. The fact that we have no urban center is why we enjoy our country life style, but it also means that we lack focus. In the next century, we cannot afford to put one town or city above the others. We must work together. To use a slogan of the Revolutionary generation, "United we stand, divided we fall." How can we take seriously our four school districts scrambling for diminishing resources when consolidation is the place to begin? We have been divided too long. We have duplicated facilities and services too long and we can no



Four Rockingham County High School Bands at "A Salute to Rockingham County". The salute was held at Reidsville Senior High School Stadium on October 26, 1985. Photograph from The Reidsville Review, October 28, 1985

longer afford it. Our present board of commissioners is looking to the future by centralizing county services at the county seat. Our elected leaders must generate the leadership to unite this county. To lay the foundation for a county-wide vision we must begin to plan for this next century if we are not going to have solutions imposed by other levels of government.

Our essential natural resource and the key to our future is water. Our rivers are our most visible natural feature--the Dan, the Smith, the Mayo, the Haw. These rivers are not as pure as William Byrd found them in 1728 when he wrote that:

The stream (the Dan River) which was perfectly clear, ran down about two knots, or two miles, an hour when the water was at the lowest. The bottom was covered with a coarse gravel, spangled very thick with a shining substance that almost dazzled the eye, and the sand upon either shore sparkled with the same splendid particles. At first sight, the sunbeams, giving a yellow cast to these spangles, made us

Rockingham County: A Bicentennial Address

fancy them to be gold dust and consequently that all our fortunes were made. (Byrd, *History of the Dividing Line*, 1728)

But by the standards of our century, they are clean and are cleaner than they have ever been in this century. They provide great recreational possibilities which we are just beginning to use. What economic potential we have for the future lies with these rivers.

Our important periods of development began with the improvement of the Dan River for navigation which led to Leaksville and Madison-then power development with our first textile mill in 1840 on the Smith River. The railroad revolutionized the tobacco industry and created our first urban center, Reidsville, which grew from a handful of people in 1865 to 3,000 by 1900. The railroad and water power in tandem triggered the development of the Mayo valley and Madison, Avalon, Mayodan and Stoneville. Since we cannot foresee any radical change in our transportation system, it seems that we must look to our rivers for the future. Certainly our metropolitan neighbors are looking to our rivers for their future.

We need to decide what we want to be, what lifestyle we want our children and grandchildren to have. We have a mixed economy solidly based on agriculture and manufacturing, but our major employers, textiles and tobacco, are in uncertain times now. Certainly textiles and tobacco will survive, but possibly in a form quite different from the present. The tobacco farmer should take his cue from American Tobacco which has so diversified that it became American Brands years ago--a company which today does 45% of its business in non-tobacco products. While touring some of our county industries yesterday, I was heartened to realize how much a part of the world's economy we are--to see New Zealand wool being manufactured into Karastan rugs and to see the massive shipment of textured polyester yarns bound to the People's Republic of China from Macfield in Mayodan.

Whatever we end up with in this county, the basic question facing us is can we preserve our country, small-town lifestyle while continuing to generate the jobs for the next generation? We have many assets that we are just beginning to tap. We have one of the best community colleges in the state and we really have just begun to use its potential. Leaders with foresight, planning for the future and a unified county-wide vision will help us utilize our resources, our people and our assets so that we will retain what is the best from the past, develop our economic possibilities, live up to our potential—be the best that we can be and preserve one of the finest places to live on the earth

Speedwell's Revolutionary Traditions: A Bicentennial Address

by Lucy M. Rankin October 27, 1985

As we celebrate the bicentennial of our county, so soon after the bicentennial of the nation, I want to share with you some of the traditions that have been associated with Speedwell. Speedwell is an old church, dating officially from 1759. Around any old institution traditions arise. Some of Speedwell's best come from the Revolutionary period, shortly before our county came into being. None of the three I shall mention has yet been documented, but all are certainly within reason.

After the British had fought for three years in the northern colonies with only limited success, they turned their attention to the south. There they met greater success; and by late summer 1780 it appeared that no Patriot force would be able to stop them. Then General Nathaniel Greene was placed in command of the Patriot army in the south.

During the first two months of 1781, Greene and Lord Cornwallis, the British commander, chased each other back and forth through the upper Piedmont of North Carolina, trying to find opportunity and place for a decisive engagement. Their marches led both armies through this very area more than once; and the Speedwell, or the iron works on Troublesome Creek, is often mentioned in their diaries.

Colonel Banastre Tarleton, commander of Cornwallis's cavalry, says in his memoirs that he encamped with his men the night of February 13, 1781, at the Troublesome Creek Ironworks. Tradition says that he had his men and their horses spend the night here, the men sleeping on the cold, wet ground, while he and his officers went to the tavern across the creek and spent the night there in comfort. British coins of the period have been found at the tavern site.

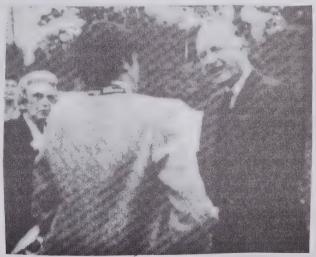
Another strong tradition is that when General Greene was in the vicinity, he used the meetinghouse here for his office. The meetinghouse of that time would have been a very crude log structure with a dirt floor, probably no windows, split logs for benches, and, tradition says, a stick chimney. Tradition says that building burned, as did a second structure erected here.

The oldest part of the building we were in this morning was erected in 1844 and is the third building on the site.

The third tradition, and the one that inspired this service, is that both British and American soldiers were buried here following the Battle of Guilford Courthouse. After weeks of playing cat-and-mouse, Greene and Cornwallis faced each other at Guilford Courthouse on March 15, 1781. The battle began early in the afternoon and was fierce and bloody. Lord Cornwallis said, "I never saw such fighting since God made me."

As night came on, Greene saw that Cornwallis was determined to conquer or be annihilated. Not willing to decimate his own army, Greene ordered his men to withdraw. Thus Cornwallis held the field and so could claim the victory, even though his losses of 532 were almost twice those of Greene's approximately 300.

Use your imagination and try to picture the scene on the battlefield after Greene's withdrawal. Here's how Samuel Ashe, an early North Carolina historian, records it: "The night succeeding this day of blood was dark



Commander Michael Saunders-Watson, right photo, a collateral descendant of Charles Watson-Wentworth for whom the county was named, talks with area residents who attended the peace plaque dedication at Speedwell Church on October 27, 1985. Photograph from The Reidsville Review, October 30, 1985.

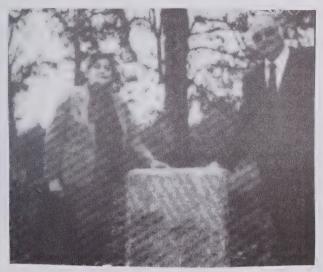
and cold, much rain falling. The dead lay unburied (at least 93 of them were British), the wounded unsheltered, and the groans of the dying and the shrieks of the living cast a deeper shade over the gloom of nature. Fatigued as the British troops were, without discrimination they took the best care of the fallen soldiers the situation admitted; but without tents, and the houses being few, many of both armies were exposed to the deluge of rain, and it

was said that not less than fifty died during the night. The next morning was spent in burying the dead and in providing comfort for the wounded, Cornwallis paying equal attention to friends and foes. He was a man of generous and lofty spirit, and rancor was foreign to his nature. In Parliament he had been a friend of America and had opposed the measures of the ministry. Now he treated the fallen without discrimination. The dead being buried, he returned to New Garden, leaving some seventy of his wounded, incapable of being moved, to the humanity of General Greene."

In the meantime Greene marched (north) toward Reedy Fork Creek. He paused beyond the creek to allow his stragglers to catch up, and then marched all night to the iron works on Troublesome Creek, arriving at the dawn of a gray, wet day. Greene had not removed his clothes or slept in a bed for six weeks, and his men were heavy-legged from hunger and fatigue; but he feared and expected Cornwallis would follow him, and he must make ready for another engagement. So, all day long, under the pelting rain, he had his men dig earthworks in the bluffs over Troublesome Creek. Those earthworks are still visible. Cornwallis did not choose to follow Greene, as we know, so there was opportunity for the Patriot army to rest and reassemble before moving on five days later.

It was during this period following the battle that soldiers of both armies are thought to have died and been buried here, a very reasonable supposition. No doubt some of Greene's men had been so seriously wounded that they would have succumbed to their wounds. Also, in Cornwallis's listing of his casualties, there is the item "26 missing." No doubt most of these were taken prisoner by Greene. It is thought some of them died of their wounds. Tradition says these casualties were buried on the hill this side of the creek. Interestingly, some of our oldest identifiable graves are in that general area, lending credence to the belief that the oldest part of the cemetery lay in that direction.

Whether this burial tradition is fact or not, it was firmly held by older people of the community, it is reasonable, and it gives food for much thought today. It was fitting that these fallen men of the two armies rested together, both those here and those buried nearer the battlefield. Both groups were men of the common Anglo-Saxon heritage, loyal to their governments as each understood his government, loyal to principles



Lucy M Rankin and Rev. Reid Montgomery pose at the peace plaque dedication which was held at Speedwell Presbyterian Church on October 27, 1985. Photograph from The Reidsville Review, October 30, 1985.

growing out of their common heritage. In fact, the American Patriots were fighting for some of the very rights their British forbears had wrested from King John at Runnymede in 1215. How sad that such a price had to be paid to establish the rights of individuals and governments to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.

In the years since 1781 the United States and the world have been engaged in much more destructive conflicts than our War for Independence. Efforts have been made toward disarmament, peace pacts among nations have been signed--but the conflicts continue, with increasingly destructive weapons. The world cries, "Peace! Peace!" but there is no peace. This monument we dedicate today is our weak effort to tell the world that we want peace, that we will work for peace, and that our prayers will continue for peace, here and throughout the world.

The February 1786 Rockingham County Court Minutes

Transcribed by Sarah Setliff

The first session of the Rockingham County Court met on the fourth Monday in February, 1786 at the home of Adam Tate near Eagle Falls on Dan River. Tate's 1,025 acre plantation was on the south side of the river about three miles northwest of Wentworth. The court continued to meet at Tate's home until August 1787. The next term of court met in the newly constructed courthouse in present day Wentworth. According to tradition Tate's home near Eagle Falls was later torn down and rebuilt in Wentworth where it served as the home of Browder Whittemore. (See *The Reidsville Review*, March 30, 1894).

The original court minutes are in the North Carolina State Archives in Raleigh. The minutes are available on microfilm and a Xerox copy of the 1786 minutes is in the Special Collection Room at Rockingham Community College. Hopefully a volunteer can be found to abstract the minutes. The February, 1786 minutes are presented with the original grammar, spelling and punctuation.

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA ROCKINGHAM COUNTY

Agreeable to an act of the general assembly passed at New Bern the 29th day of December A D(1785) for the dividing the County of Guilford into two Distinct Counties, appointing Commissioners to divide the same beginning at Haw River Bridge running from thence East & West which when see shall be in two distinct Counties and that part of Guilford County north of the said dividing line shall henceforth be erected into a new and distinct County by the name of Rockingham, and by virtue of a Commission of the Peace signed by his excellency Rich. Caswell, the Governor of the State aforesaid directed to James Hunter, Samuel Henderson, George Peay, Hugh Challis, Thomas Henderson, Adam Tate, James Gallaway, John Leak, Joshua Smith, Peter Oneal, Abraham Philips, William Bethel, John May, and John Hunter, Junn., Son of John, appointing them Justices of the peace in said

County of Rockingham. Also appointing any three of the said Justices to meet at Mr. Adam Tates the fourth Monday in February next insuring the date therof after giving and qualifying by taking the oath prescribed by law to administer the same to the rest there companion justices nominated in said commission.

In obediance therto James Hunter, George Peav and Hugh Challis appeared at said house of Mr. Adam Tates the fourth Monday in February aforesaid and took the oaths for said and at the same time administered the oaths of office to Thomas Henderson, Adam Tate, James Gallaway, John Leak, Joshua Smith, Peter Oneal, Abraham Philips, William Bethel, John May, & John Hunter, Jun. (son of John) who took there seats accordingly and proceeded to the choice of there clerk when Thomas Henderson was unanionously chosen who took the necessary oaths of office and entered into bond with Alexander Martin & Nath, Williams, Esquires in the sum of five thousand pounds for the faithful keeping the records of said County at the same time John May who was by the said court chosen Sheriff who produced a commission in open court from his excellency Richard Caswell, Esq. Governor and commissioning him Sheriff of said County for one year who came in and qualified agreable to law and entered into bond the sum of five thousand pounds with James Hunter and Joshua Smith for the faithfull discharge of his duty.

At a County Court of Pleas and Quarter Sessions begun and held for the County of Rockingham at the Home of Adam Tates the fourth Monday in February A.D. 1786

Present the Worshipful

James Hunter
George Peay
Hugh Challis
Adam Tate
James Gallaway
John Leak
Joshua Smith
Peter Oneal

Abraham Philips

ESQUIRES JUSTICES

William Bethel John Hunter, Jurn. son of John

A deed of conveyance from Samuel Dolton, William Dolton, & William Martin to David Chives Dated the 22nd day of February 1786 for about 150 acres of land lying in the County of Caroline in the common Wealth of Virginia, contiguous to the land held by said Chivis in said County of Caroline, came into open court and acknowledged the execution of the same

in due form of Law, at the same time Charlotte Dolton wife of Samuel Dolton Jun. came into court who was privily examined by James Hunter, Esq. appointed by the court for the purpose, who stated that she volintarily and of her free will and accord without any compulsion of her husband or any other person relinquished her rights of ower and released all other claims or title she had in and to the said land.

Adam Tate offered and was unanimously chosen Coroner of the County of Rockingham who offered to the court as his security Alexander Martin, James Gallaway, & Thomas Henderson. Esqs. in the sum of two thousand pounds for his securities and was approved of.

Abraham Philips, Esq. offered and unanimously elected by the court, Surveyor of said County & gave Peter Oneal & James Hunter Esquires for security agreable to law in the sum of two thousand pounds for the faithful discharge of his duty.

John Hunter, Esq. is appointed register of the County and entered into bond with James Hunter & George Peay Esqs. in the sum of four thousand pounds for the faithful discharge of his duty. George Peay, Esq. is appointed Ranger in said county and entered into bond with John Leak and John Hunter, Jun. Esqs. in the sum of two thousand for the faithful discharge of his duty.

William Clark, Sen. is appointed Entry Taker for said county who is to enter into Bond next court with security in the sum of two thousand pounds for the faithful discharge of his duty.

Nath. Williams, Esq. is appointed attorney to prosecute in behalf of the State for the a forsaid county. The court adjourned until tomorrow.

Tuesday Court met according to adjournment.

Present James Hunter Abraham Philips James Gallaway

ESQUIRES

Ordered that John Joyce serve as overseer of the road from the ford at David Hanbys along the ridge leading from said ford on the north side of the long branch to Guilford road near Scales Mill and that he open and keep said road in good repair. Ordered that Rich. P. Cardwell be appointed overseer of the road from Joyce ford on Mayo River to the survey line on the ridge between Bever Island and Buffallo and that he with the hands convenient keep said road in good repair, and that said Cardwell and Joyce have all the hands on the south side of Mayo River and all to the north of

Benjamin Cooks hands to the Virginia line and Surry. Ordered that Benjamin Cook be appointed overseer of the road from Joyce ford on the Mayo River cross Bever Island to Surry County line and that he keep the same in good repair with the hands convenient. Ordered that John Scales be appointed overseer of the road from the Surry Line to Dan River and that he with the hands that formerly worked on said road keep the same in good Mayo River ford near the mouth up by his own house to the Surry line and Laremore is appointed overseer of the road from Dan River to William Flemings and that William Fleming serve as overseer of said road from his own house to Guilford line. Ordered that Mathew Pegs, Rich P. Cardwell and James Rhodes be appointed Constables in the districts of James Hunter & Joshia Smith, Esqs, Ordered that James Williams be appointed overseer of the road from Caswell line to the High Rock ford on the Haw River Ordered that James Walker be appointed overseer of the road from the forks near Dun's Bridge to the High Rock Ford in Haw River Ordered that Joel Johnston serve as overseer of the road from the County Line to the High Rock Ford on Haw River Isham Lanier is appointed Constable in Capt. Abraham Philips District who qualified in open court James Appelton is appointed constable in Capt Oneal's district and qualified in open court. Samuel Bethel is appointed constable in Capt. Bethel's district who qualified Thomas Pounds is appointed constable in Mr. Tates district who qualified Manlove Tarrant is appointed constable in Mr. Challises district who qualified John Lemmon is appointed constable in Spring Garden district who qualified. Jeremiah Norris is appointed constable in John Hunters. Jun. (son of John) district qualified Eli Scurry is appointed constable in Samuel Hendersons Esq. district & William Williams also who

Ordered that the sheriff appear at next court with a wand not less than eight long and one inch diameter, painted white The last will and testament of James Gentry deceased was produced in open court and was proved by the oath of Joshua Smith one of the subscribing witnesses thereto and on motion was ordered to be recorded Then came in Watson Gentry one of the Executors appointed by the said testators & qualified as such accordingly, ordered that Letters testamentary to him, the other executors appointed having personally resigned in open court and inventory of said estate is returned which was ordered to be registered. Ordered that John Asher orphan of John Asher deseased aged fourteen years last June be bound to Gidon Johnston Sr. until he arrives to the age of twenty one years, to learn the. ______ said Johnston agrees to give to the said apprentice at the time he becomes of age a good suit of clothes, a horse, saddle & bridle

Ordered that Hugh Patrick be appointed overseer of the road in the room of Francis McBride and that he with the hands convenient keep the same in good repair.

The Last Will and Testament of James Roberts deceased was proved in open court by the oath of George Peay, James Leak, John Leak & Henry Scales the subscribing witnesses there to which was ordered to be registered, then came in Elizabeth Roberts the widow Relict of the said James, and Silas Lightfoot Roberts two of the Executors appointed in said will and qualified as such agreeable to law, ordered that letters & testamentary issued to them accordingly--

Ordered that James Hunter, James Gallaway, & George Peay esq. be appointed to settle with Joshua Smith, Esq. Executor of Philemon Deatheridge and to make report there of to next court

Ordered that John Davis be appointed overseer of the road from Mayo Ford to the forks above Sam. Rogers and that the hands convenient work on said road.

Ordered that William McCellon be appointed overseer of the road from the Mayo River to Mr. Galloways store & that he with the hands convenient keep the same in good repair.

Ordered that Philip Jacob Irion be appointed overseer of the road from the Lone Island Ford on Dan River to the Grassey Springs.

Ordered that Henry Scales be appointed overseer of the said road from the Grassey Springs to Smith River & that he with the hands convenient keep the same in good repair.

Ordered that Peter Terry be appointed overseer of the road from Smith River to Dry Creek and that he with the hands convenient keep the same in good repair.

Ordered that Aquiller Wilson be appointed overseer of the road from Dry Ceek to the Virginia Line and that he with the hands convenient keep the same in good repair.

Ordered that the following persons towit: Valentine Allen, Richard Sharp, Turbeyfield Barnes, Allen Dod, John Fields, James Joyce, James Holderness, William H. Allen, Jno. Chadwell, Michal Thomas, Joseph Gibson, Bartholomew Grogan, Lewis Thomas, John Menzies, James Ray, John Pillor or any twelve of them be a jury to view and lay out a road from the Eagle Falls on Dan River to the Virginia (line) near Thomas Jamisons and make report there of to next court.

Ordered that each constable within this county appear at the next court and all succeeding courts to be held for said County with wands painted black six inches at the upper end to be six feet long and one & a half inches diameter.

Ordered that James McCollom be cited to appear at the next court to be held for said county and render an account of his Exectorship as it is suggested to this court that he is making way with the Estate to the Injustice of the orphans of Daniel McCollum, deceased Administration of the Estate of Edward Parker, Deceased, is granted to Sarah Parker the widow and relict of the deceased came into open court and qualified agreeable to law and entered into bond with Jermiah Harris in the sum of _______ pounds for the faithful discharge of her duty.

Ordered that the perishable estate be sold agreeable to law & return there of made to next court. Administration of the estate of Thos. Bruce, Deceased, is granted to Major Thomas Owen, it appearing to the court that he was the oldest creditor who came into open court and qualified agreeable to law & entered into bond with Leven Mitchel in the sum of one hundred fifty pounds for the faithful discharge of his duty. Ordered that John Lemmon, Isham Rice & William Bethel, Esq. be appointed to be summoned to attend the next Superior Court of Law & Equity to be held for the District of Salisbury the 15th day of March next as Jurors.

Ordered that the Sheriff take in to possession a certain Horse now in the possession of William Barnes which said Horse was brought into the neighborhood by a certain Charles Gordon and is supposed to be stolen, & keep the said in his care and cause him to be advertised at the cost of the owner if any comes, in the public Gazette of the state. Jurors appointed for next Court Towit, Archd. Yarbrough, Samuel Watt, Junr., Joseph Thrasher Joseph Clark, Andrew Wilson, John Dabney, Richd. Marr, Robert Coleman, James Scales, James Vernon, Sen., John Fields, James Joyce, David Hanby, David Dolton, Henry Scales, William Fleming, Robert Means, Gidion Johnston, Sen., Joel Walker, James Sanders, Nath. Harris, Darby Callahan, Richd Roberts, Joseph Hopper, John Hallums, Robert Nelson, James Hays, Henry Work, Mathews Mills, Benjamin Parrott, James Wright, Thomas Massey, Hugh Lynch, Daniel Adkins, (34) Ordered that James Gallaway, Esq. be appointed to purchase 2 blank books for the use of the clerk & registers office of this county-- Then Court adjourned until Court in ______ to meet at the house of Mr. Adam Tates

The Postmasters of Wentworth, North Carolina: The First Seventy-Five Years 1794-1869

by Michael Perdue

The county seat of Rockingham County had been established for eight years before its post office. On January 1, 1787, the state General Assembly appointed a commission to select a permanent site for the county seat "... on the lands of Charles Mitchell on the east side of Big Rockhouse Creek." Such a site was established by April of the same year and within a few months, construction had commenced upon the courthouse and gaol (jail).

The town was known as "Rockingham Courthouse" and in some references "Rockingham". The initial growth of the settlement was slow and the legislature took measures to reverse this condition. In 1796 the General Assembly commissioned the formation of a town to be known as Wentworth at or near the county seat. The legislature repealed this act in 1797 but reinstated it the following year. Shortly therafter several lots were sold in Wentworth and the construction of homes and stores, though not in vast numbers, began around the courthouse and jail.

Meanwhile, a post office was established at the county seat. On November 9, 1794 Rockingham Courthouse became the site for one of twenty-five post offices established in the state that year. As of December 31, 1794, fifty-one post offices existed in North Carolina.²

The procedures of establishing a post office were mainly routine in the rural areas. Once the (deputy) post master was appointed by the Post Office Department, he would be sent his commission, a table of the country's post offices showing their distances to the seat of the government, a map of the United States, a saddle bag, a copy of postal laws, forms or folios, a table of postage rates, and various ledgers for record keeping.³

The compensation system for postmasters predated the fixed salary of pay. The first postmasters of Rockingham Courthouse (Wentworth) were subject to the compensation system adopted by the Post Office Department in 1792 as follows; On any sum collected under \$100.00, 30%; from \$100.00

to \$300.00 25%; from \$400.00 to \$2000.00, 20%; from \$2400.00 and up, 8% and 50% of postage collected on newspapers, magazines and similar materials. Postmasters received one cent for each letter lodged in the post office or carried by private ships or vessels.⁴

There was also an established accounting system in post offices. Four times a year, postmasters submitted to the general post office transcripts of accounts of letters and newspapers received and sent, ship letters received and receipts for the monies paid for them, letters sent overseas by the post office, receipts for advertising unclaimed letters, a bill for dead letters, post bills and receipts for contingent expenses and quarterly accounts.⁵

Peter Watson was appointed (deputy) postmaster of Rockingham Courthouse on November 9, 1794. Watson's exact date of birth is unknown but is believed to have been about 1772. The son of John and Margaret Watson, Peter was around six years of age when the family moved to Rockingham County from probably Virginia.

During his tenure as postmaster, Watson served as Deputy Clerk of Court for Rockingham County from about 1794-1795. Although it can not be verified, Watson is believed to have married Elizabeth White in Halifax County, Virginia in February 1798. The marriage was of short duration as Watson died between 1803 and 1808. The widow and their son John M. (ca. 1798-?) moved to Williamson County, Tennessee.

John Charters followed Watson as postmaster on December 31, 1799.8 It was during Charters' five years as postmaster that the official name of the post office was changed from Rockingham Courthouse to Wentworth on February 14, 1801.9 Nevertheless, references to Rockingham Courthouse continued into the nineteenth century. The location of Charters' post office is unknown. In the same year he was appointed postmaster, Charters purchased of the Wentworth town trustees lots 15, 16, and 17. As lot 15 was across the street from the courthouse and was in a more densely populated area of Wentworth, it may have been that Charters had his office in a store or some type of building on this lot. 11

John Charters, an immigrant of Scotland, was the son of Alexander Charters and Mary Lennox. John Charters is first recorded in the 1800 census, as living in Rockingham County. A sister of John Charters, Janet Lennox, married Ronald McDonald who emigrated to this country in 1818 and settled near Leaksville. Charters owned large land holdings in both Rockingham and Stokes counties which he bequeathed to the McDonalds upon his death in either 1826 or 1827. 12

John Galloway, who was appointed postmaster in December 1804, is virtually unknown. No records have been located in reference to him and no connection appear to exist between him and the prominent Galloway

family of Rockingham County.13

Ambrose Peay, the fourth postmaster of Wentworth, was appointed April 1, 1806. The eighth child born to George and Mary Eubank Peay, Ambrose was born on August 29, 1769 in Goodband County, Virginia. The Peays moved to Rockingham County shortly after the birth of this child. It is believed that Ambrose Peay married Agnes Saunders Wall, widow of Claiborn Wall, a Wentworth taxernkeeper, sometime after 1802. This union produced two children: George Washington (ca. 1814-after 1850) and Mary H. (after 1802-1829). Ambrose Peay died in the Spring of 1815 during an epidemic of "Camp Plague" in the county that also claimed the life of Ambrose's brother James. The county of the county of the life of Ambrose's brother James.

The postal records give the name of the postmaster for the years 1806-1812 as Ambrose Perry, not Peay. As no other records have been found in reference to Ambrose Perry, it should be assumed that the postal record is in error. Ambrose Peay is believed to have lived in the Wentworth area around 1806 which further establishes his claim to this office.

James Campbell, an immigrant from Scotland, became postmaster on March 3, 1812. Unfortunately little is known of Campbell's origin except that he setted in Rockingham County prior to 1800. He purchased some lots in Leaksville but settled in Wentworth. It is unknown what business Campbell was engaged in at Wentworth, but he possibly was a merchant. During the War of 1812, Campbell was made captain of the 4th Company Grenadiers detached from the Rockingham Regiment. Campbell and his comrades were called to Hillsborough in November 1814. At Hillsborough, Campbell was made first major of a detached regiment sent to Norfolk but the war ended before he saw action. 18

Campbell returned to Wentworth at war's end and resumed his duties as postmaster. In a letter to Thomas Ruffin dated November 27, 1815, Campbell gives an interesting account of a scheduled hanging that month in Wentworth. A Mr. Welch was convicted in 1815 for horse stealing, then a capital felony, and was sentenced to death. . .

At 12 O'C (Noon) he (Welch) was taken from the jail for the place of execution (on the west-side about 150 yards below W.(illiam) Wrights) attended by Thomas Moore, Robert and Charles Moore, Methodist Preachers. I held the Governor's (William Miller) pardon, and at 2 O'clock when the ministers had nearly finished, I went down & gave it to the Sheriff(Mattock). I read it to nearly one thousand persons. Welch was brought back to prison he will remain until tomorrow when he will swearout. He is greatful to you (Ruffin) and your father. By your means his life has been spared.

. T'was fortunate you sent an express there being no mail on Monday ${\rm last.^{19}}$

Obviously the mail deliveries were irregular at Wentworth, several days sometimes passing by before a delivery was made.

On April 22, 1817 Campbell married Jennett Menzies, daughter of Robert Menzies and it is believed that one child was born to this union. ²⁰ In 1818 Campbell resigned as postmaster and moved to Leaksville where he became cashier at the Leaksville branch of the State Bank of North Carolina. On December 27, 1819 Jennett Campbell died after an illness of a few days. ²¹ Campbell himself survived until around 1827 and upon his death James Barnett, his administrator sold one of Campbell's Leaksville lots. ²²

Robert Martin, Jr. was the son of Robert and Martha Dvennen Martin, born April 12, 1784 in Rockingham County, North Carolina. The father, Robert, Senior, was a brother of Governor Alexander Martin of North Carolina. The marriage with Martha Dvennen produced at least two other children, both girls, Sally and Rachel. In 1822 Robert Martin, Sr. died leaving the family plantation on the Dan River to his name sake with the provision that the widow would have lifetime rights to the property. 24

In December 7, 1818 Robert Martin, Jr. was appointed postmaster at Wentworth and in the following year purchased of Robert Gallaway, Wentworth lots 15, 16 and 17.25 These were the same lots purchased by John Charters in 1799. It is probable that Martin, who operated a store in Wentworth by 1825, operated his post office on this parcel of land. Family tradition holds that Martin's brother-in-law Josiah Settle was in a partnership with Martin. In 1825 Martin and Settle's young nephew, David Settle Reid, came to clerk in the store in Wentworth. Four years later Reid, who was destined to be a noted political figure in the antebellum period of North Carolina, became the first postmaster of Reidsville.26

In June 1823 Robert Martin married Mary "Polly" Settle, (1798-1860), the daughter of David and Rhoda Mullins Settle. This marriage produced two daughters; Lucinda and Martha. The daughters were widely known for their charm, poise and beauty and were educated at Mrs. Sigvewney's Select School of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Lucinda and Martha spent considerable time at Washington where their cousin David Reid served as a congressman. It was following one of the visits to Washington that Lucinda returned home to make plans for her wedding only to fall suddenly ill and die on September 15, 1846. The death of Lucinda Martin deeply grieved her father who never recovered from the loss. In April, 1847 Martha Martin married U.S. Senator Stephen A. Douglas of Illinois. April 1847 Martha Martin married U.S. Senator Stephen A. Douglas of Illinois.

Robert Martin served as postmaster at Wentworth until February 182. In 1836, Martin said town lots 15, 16 and 17 to Joseph Holderby and purchased 12 acres, lots 46 and 15 from the town trustees. The lots 46 and 58, were located southwest of the Courthouse. On January 22, 1830, Robert Martin was reappointed postmaster and served for eight years.

For several years the Martins lived in Wentworth where Robert Martin served on the first board of crustees at the Methodist Uharch in 1836. Mainly, however the family resided on a 500 acre farm on the Dan River. In addition Martin swited a plantation on the Pearle River in Lawrence County, Mississippi. On May 25, 1848, Robert Martin died of "disorganization of the stomach," and was buried in the Settle Cemetery near Reidsville. His obituary stated that by Martin's death "... society has lost an enterprising and entergetic citizen; the poor a liberal friend; his wife a kind husband and his daughter (Martha) an affectionate and indulgent parent."



Plat map of Wentworth lots as surveyed in 1799 and 1835. Researched by Robert W. Carter, Jr. and drawn by Ann O. Rich. The lot numbers on this map coincide with references to Wentworth lots mentioned in this article.

Josiah Settle, the son of David and Rhoda Mullins Settle was born in Rockingham County on August 24, 1799 the sixth of nine children. Nothing is known of Settle's early life except that by 1825 he was in business with his brother-in-law Robert Martin in a store in Wentworth. On June 3, 1826 Settle married Frances L. Graves (b. 1807) the daughter of Senator Azariah Graves, and sister of Henrietta W. Graves, who married Judge Thomas Settle, Sr. and a sister of the Hon. Calvin Graves.

In February 28, 1827 Josiah Settle was made postmaster of Wentworth and likely conducted his duties in the Martin-Settle store presumably located on lot 15 on Main Street.³⁹

On October 7, 1829 Frances Graves Settle died leaving her husband and two young girls; Elizabeth (b. 1827) and Fannie (b. ca. 1829). Settle later sold his property in North Carolina and moved west. 40

James Johnson was appointed postmaster on April 6, 1838, and the location of his office is unknown. Very little is known about Johnson's origins or when he came to Wentworth although he was living there by February 1838. Johnson had at least two sisters; Lettitia, who married Absalom Stephens, who became a tailor in Leaksville, and Jane who married John M. Bunch and lived at Oak Ridge in Guilford County.

Few significant records making reference to James Johnson have been located. A letter written by Johnson to John Bunch, his brother-in-law survives today in the possession of a distant relative. The letter, dated June 22, 1842, describes the recent formation of a county-wide temperance society of which Johnson was a vice president and gives the following account of his position as postmaster. . .

"My own health is as good as I could expect at my advanced age - could I have a milk diet I would do much better but am unable to pay for my board elsewhere. The profits of the Post Office is so much reduced, owing to so little business done throughout the country that it is not more than sufficient to keep me in decent clothing but to all these ills I humbly submit I feel thankful that it is as well with me as it is.⁴⁴

The above reference of reduced profits of the post office seem to be no idle comment in Johnson's case. By May 1842, he had become the Rockingham County agent for the sale of Dr. Brandreth's Vegetable Universal Pills, a popular cure-all at that time, no doubt in order to boost his meager income. ¹⁵ No later references to Johnson have been found.

James Daniel Ellington was born on November 16, 1812, the seventh child of John (1776-1826) and Frances Waddell Ellington (1776-1840) of the Wentworth area. ⁴⁶ James D. Ellington married Wilmoth Stone (1812-1876) the daughter of Seffereign Stone in Henry County, Virginia on

September 25, 1844. Four sons were born to this union; James Preston (1846-1864), William W. (ca. 1848-ca. 1894), James Hardy (1850-1929) and Rufus Bruce (1852-1921).

James D. Ellington was appointed postmaster on April 6, 1846. The exact location of his office is unknown.⁴⁹ In 1848 Ellington purchased Wentworth town lots 19, 20, 46 and 58 located west and southwest of the County Courthouse. His home was located on either lot 19 or 20 and was likely the site of the post office.⁵⁰ Ellington continued to live there until 1865 when he sold lots 19, 20 and part of 46 to Mary C. Allen.⁵¹ After his term as postmaster Ellington devoted his time to farming and by 1870 had become a tobacconist in Wentworth.⁵² Ellington was a devoted member of the Wentworth Methodist Church in which cemetery he was buried following his death on September 12, 1888.⁵³

Thomas Anderson Ratliffe was born January 12, 1831 in Pittsylvania County, Virginia, the son of James and Elizabeth Anderson Ratliffe. The Ratliffe family moved to Rockingham County in the early 1830's.

On May 6, 1858, Thomas Ratliffe married Martha Bethell Johnston (1836-1884), the daughter of Richard Bethel and Susan Simpson Johnston. To this union were born ten children; Eugenia May, Bettie Sue (who married David L. Withers), Mollie Josephine (died in infancy), Willie Anna, Fannie Johnston, Cora Alice, Robert Richard, Henrietta Alberta, Thomas Anderson, Jr, and Maude Irene (died in infancy). 55

Thomas Ratliffe was appointed postmaster for Wentworth on January 10, 1855. The location of the post office from 1855-1859 is undetermined." In 1859, Ratliffe and his brother William B. (b. 1844) purchased a lot across the street from the county courthouse and built a two-story store building. Ratliffe continued to operate the store until the 1880's. The post office was kept in this store while Ratliffe was postmaster. 58

It was Ratliffe who served under the Confederate Postal Department during the War Between the States. Until June 1, 1861 the United States provided postal service to the Southern states, after which the Confederate Postal Department took over such duties. On July 6, 1861, Ratliffe was reappointed under the Confederate government.⁵⁹

Postal Policies were established by the Confederate Congress in February 1861. Stamps were issued in denominations of two, five, ten and twenty cents, but their scarcity made cash payment necessary as was the case before the war. The rates were as follows; five cents for single letters, not over a half ounce, within the Confederacy or five hundred miles, ten cents for over five hundred miles; newspapers were charged two cents for three ounces and two cents for each additional ounce; and periodicals printed outside the Confederacy were charged double rates. In late 1862, domestic letter rates were doubled to ten cents.⁶⁰

Postmasters were compensated from 1861-63 as follows; on any sum not exceeding \$100.00, 50%; but to any postmaster at whose office the mail was to arrive regularly between 9 pm and 5 am. 50%; sums over \$100.00 but not exceeding \$400.00, 40%; sums over \$400.00 but not exceeding \$2,400.00, 30%; and all sums exceeding \$2,400.00, 10%. On the amount of postage on letters and packages received at a distribution office the rate was 8%.

In the first weeks of 1864, due to the Confederacy's fragile economic state, the postmasters' commissions were raised as follows; for any sum under \$100.00,60%; over \$100.00 but not over \$400.00,50%; over \$400.00 but not exceeding \$2,400.00,40%, and all sums over \$2,400.00,20%. With the collapse of the Confederate Government in April 1865, the Confederate post offices were placed under Union control. Despite its end result, the Confederate Postal Department was the most efficient executive department in the Confederate Government.

Thomas Ratliffe remained as postmaster nearly a year after the war ended. He continued to be a respected and active citizen of Wentworth. A founder of the Wentworth Presbyterian Church in 1859, Ratliffe served as church trustee for many years. In the 1870's he also served as Chairman of the Rockingham County Board of Commissioners. Much of Ratliffe's spare time was devoted to his hobby of horticulture, specializing in hybridizing roses. Following the death of his wife in 1884, Thomas Ratliffe married his cousin, Fannie Anderson Andrews, of Hillsborough in 1896. Failing health prompted Ratliffe to move from his Main Street home, known as "Magnolia Vale" to Reidsville with other family members." Ratliffe died on May 18, 1906 and was buried in the Wentworth Presbyterian Church cemetery beside his first wife. "

Neil Ellington, at the age of sixteen, became postmaster on February 5, 1866. The eldest son of William M. "Buck" (1808-1877), and Mary Dalton Ellington (1827-1857), Neil Ellington was born on September 20, 1849. There were younger brothers and one sister: James Buck (1856-1932), a noted tobacco salesman; Buck (1855-?); Samuel Buck (1853-1928) a noted Wentworth physician, and Mary Frances (1851-1906) who married James W. Reid of Wentworth, a United States Congressman from 1884-1886. The state of the same of the same

Neil Ellington spent his childhood in Wentworth and for several years his family operated the Ellington Hotel on Main Street some fifty yards west of the County Courthouse. Ellington's appointment as postmaster was likely based upon his lack of connections with the Confederate Government or army. The location of Ellington's post office is uncertain but was likely to have been in one of his relative's stores on Main Street.⁶⁷

Neil Ellington left Wentworth for Greensboro sometime after 1870 and began a dry goods business with Bogart and Murray and later with W.S.

Confederate States of America.

POST OFFICE DEPARTMENT.

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Letter to Thomas A Ratliffe from Henry St. George Offut. Chief of the Contract Bureau of the Confederate Post Office Department, dated January 19, 1864. Offut writes: "Referring to your letter of the 22nd ult., I have to inform you that this Department cannot made an arrangement to have the mails carried on the Rail Road now being constructed between Danville and Greensboro' till it is completed."

(Courtesy of Miss Nancy Withers)

Moore. Ellington was later employed by the National Bank of Greensboro of which he was assistant cashier by February 1882. He rose to the bank president's position in 1891. Ellington served as president for twenty six years and later continued as Chairman of the Board despite failing health."

On May 22, 1884 Ellington married Ida Louise Sloan, the daughter of Robert and Sarah P. Sloan. To this union was born a daughter. Paisley, (1889-1974), who married Max T. Payne. Active in civic and church affairs, Neil Ellington was a captain in the "Guilford Grays" a reactivated Confederate militia of the Greensboro area. He was a member of the First Presbyterian Church in Greensboro. Ellington died at his West Market Street home on January 30, 1921. He was buried at Green Hill Cemetery in Greensboro. No descendants of Neil Ellington survive.

Lucy Ann Allen who became the first woman postmaster of Wentworth was born on December 27, 1833 to James Samuel Allen (1801-1846) and Mary Carter Ellington (1804-1870). Lucy Allen was the second of at least six children. The others were Mary Magdeline (1831-1907) later a Wentworth postmaster; Ellen Frances (1835-1916), the wife of postmaster Turner Patterson; James A. (ca. 1837-?); William Samuel (1839-?) and Elizabeth (ca. 1841-?). The birthplace of Lucy Allen is unknown, but family tradition relates that the Allen family resided in the Bruce's Crossroads area of Guilford about 1835 and this may have been the place of birth. The state of the stat

In 1842 James S. Allen purchased of William M. Ellington 127 acres on Bear Branch on the north side of Wentworth. Tradition holds that James Allen then constructed a two story home on a knoll overlooking Wentworth. James Allen died in 1846 but it is believed that the family continued to live on the farm until 1865. In 1865 Mary Allen purchased of James D. Ellington three acres and seventy six poles of land on the west side of the county courthouse. This parcel of land consisted of town lots 19 and 20 and part of 46 on the town plat of Wentworth. Mary Allen lived in the house on this property until her death in 1870. It is likely that this building was the site of the post office after Lucy Allen was appointed postmaster on June 29, 1869.

Little is known about Lucy Allen's early years but tradition relates that she stayed at home to care for her mother after all the other children had either left home or had married. On August 15, 1870 Lucy Allen married Dr. John Richard Raine (1835-1892), the son of Richard and Elizabeth Raine of Cumberland County, Virginia. The Rev. Numa Fletcher Reid, a friend of both bride and groom performed the marriage ceremony. To Dr. Raine had served in the 45th North Carolina Regiment as a surgeon during the Civil War and was a founder of Howard's Chapel Christian Church near Wentworth in 1881. To Dr. and Mrs. Raine made their home in a quaint two

11		The April 30/88
1	(No. 40.)	POST OFFICE DEPARTMENT,
	TOPOGRAPHER	CONTRACT OFFICE,
12	61	WASHINGTON, Cifrie 23, 1868.
a of the success	the relative position General requests y	* Topographer of this Department to determine, with as much occuracy as possible, so of Post Offices, so that they may be correctly delineated on its maps, the Postmaster on to fill up the spaces and answer the questions below, and return the same, verified and dated, under cover to this office. Respectfully, dec., Respectfully, dec., Soont Axistant Postmaster General.
and	*Its local rear	opt. I rame of my office is Tradewill see of Rockingham
100	It is situated County of Ro	in Township, State of North Garelina
20.	The name of This office is.	the most prominent river near it is \$\int_{\infty} \delta_{2,2}\$. the nearest creek is \$\int_{\infty} \tau_{\infty} \tau_{\inft
13/		from said nearest creek, on the section side of it. the nearest office on route No. 5397 is disabstille, and its
1263	distance is . 7/2	miles, by the traveled road, in a La Kart direction from this my office.
B		the nearest office on the same route on the other side is Aladator. 15 miles in a West direction from this my office.
1 7		the nearest office off the route is Trublesones and its
The same	distance by the m	ost direct road is 7 / miles in a double direction from this my office.
12		his, the names of all other offices near your office in different directions from it, and n it by the most direct roads.
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Periodically, the Post Office Department required the postmaster to file a topographical report giving the approximate location of the particular post office. This report is the earliest one located for the Wentworth Post Office in 1868 when Neil Ellington was postmaster. (Courtesy of the National Archives).

story home on East Main Street in Wentworth. *I Mrs. Raine relinquished her postal duties in September 1870 to her niece, Mary C. Hancock. *I Again little is known about Lucy Raine's married life as she and Dr. Raine had no children. She corresponded frequently with her several nieces and nephews who were the children of Ellen Allen by her marriage to Turner Patterson who lived in Danville. It is apparent from her correspondence that Mrs. Raine suffered periodically from poor health. By May 1885 Lucy Raine's health had deteriorated so she was confined to her home. *I On July 4, 1885 Lucy Allen Raine died at the age of fifty-one, and was buried in the Methodist Church cemetery at Wentworth. *I Dr. Raine continued his practice at his office in Wentworth but poor health necessitated the moving of his office to his home. On January 17, 1888 he married Lucy Lee Hancock (1861 - 1937) daughter of Lucy Allen Raine's sister Mary Allen Hancock. *I Dr. Raine died April 14, 1892 and was buried at the Wentworth Methodist Church. *I Dr. Raine died April 14, 1892 and was buried at the Wentworth Methodist Church. *I Dr. Raine died April 14, 1892 and was buried at the Wentworth Methodist Church. *I Dr. Raine died April 14, 1892 and was buried at the Wentworth Methodist Church. *I Dr. Raine died April 14, 1892 and was buried at the Wentworth Methodist Church. *I Dr. Raine died April 14, 1892 and was buried at the Wentworth Methodist Church. *I Dr. Raine died April 14, 1892 and was buried at the Wentworth Methodist Church. *I Dr. Raine died April 14, 1892 and was buried at the Wentworth Methodist Church. *I Dr. Raine died April 14, 1892 and was buried at the Wentworth Methodist Church. *I Dr. Raine died April 14, 1892 and was buried at the Wentworth Methodist Church. *I Dr. Raine died April 14, 1892 and was buried at the Wentworth Methodist Church. *I Dr. Raine died April 14, 1892 and was buried at the Wentworth Methodist Church. *I Dr. Raine died April 14, 1892 and was buried at the Wentworth Methodist Church. *I Dr. Raine died

Postmasters of Wentworth, North Carolina 1794-1869

NAME

Peter Watson
John Charters
John Galloway
Ambrose Peay
James Campbell
Robert Martin, Jr.
Josiah Settle
Robert Martin, Jr.
James Johnson
James Daniel Ellington
Thomas Anderson Ratliffe
Neil Ellington
Lucy Ann Allen

DATE APPOINTED

November 9, 1794 December 31, 1799 December, 1804 April 1, 1806 March 10, 1812 December 7, 1818 February 28, 1827 January 22, 1830 February 20, 1838 April 6, 1846 January 10, 1855 February 5, 1866 June 29, 1869

Notes

¹Lindley S. Butler, Wright Tavern: A Courthouse Inn and Its Proprietors (Wentworth, N.C. Rockingham County Historical Society, 1973), p. 5 and 7-8.

²Arthur Hecht, "Postal History of North Carolina 1789-1795, "The North Carolina Historical Review, XXV (April, 1958), p. 127

³Hecht, Postal History, p. 128.

⁴Hecht, Postal History, p. 130.

⁵Hecht, Postal History, p. 150.

⁶List of Postmasters for Wentworth, North Carolina compiled by Ms. Rita Maroney, U.S. Postal Historian for Michael Perdue circa 1979.

⁷Early Families of the North Carolina Counties of Rockingham and Stokes with Revolutionary Service, (Madison, N.C., James Hunter Chapter, D.A.R., 1977), p.138.

⁸List of Postmasters for Wentworth, North Carolina.

⁹List of Postmasters for Wentworth, North Carolina.

¹⁰Common Knowledge.

¹¹Rockingham County Deed Book G p. 95 Rockingham County Register of Deeds Office, Wentworth, North Carolina.

¹²Francis I. Anderson, Anderson & Irving of Rockingham County N.C., Cox & Bryan of Onslow County, N.C. and Related Families, (Wendell, N.C., Avera Press, 1980), p.p. 22, 28, 29. Hereinafter cited as Anderson, Anderson & Irving Families.

¹³List of Wentworth Postmasters.

¹⁴List of Wentworth Postmasters.

¹⁵Jerri Brown Griffin, The Whole Kit 'N Kaboodle; The Peay Family of Rockingham County," (Madison, N.C. Twin Rivers Printing Co., 1984), pp. 31-32.

16 Raleigh Star, May 5, 1815.

¹⁷List of Wentworth Postmasters.

¹⁸C.H.C. Raboteau, ed. Muster Rolls of the Soldiers of the War of 1812 Detached from the Militia of North Carolina In 1812 and 1814. (Raleigh, Times Office, 1851), pp. 41, 139.

¹⁸ J. G. De Roulhac Hamilton, ed, The Papers of Thomas Ruffin, (Raleigh, The North Carolina Historical Commission, 1918), I, p. 164.

²⁰Rockingham County Marriage Bond Book, Rockingham County Register of Deeds, Wentworth, North Carolina.

²¹Raleigh Register, January 28, 1820.

²²Rockingham County Deed Book, 2B, p. 80.

²³"The Story of Lucinda and Martha Martin," Harry Z. Tucker, *Greensboro Daily News*, June 19, 1932. Robert Martin's grave inscription is in the Settle Cemetery east of Reidsville.

²⁴Rockingham County, Will Book A, page 240, Clerk of Court Office, Rockingham County Courthouse, Wentworth, North Carolina.

²⁵List of Wentworth Postmasters and Rockingham County Deed Book S, p. 106.

²⁶Hugh Reid Scott, ed. by Cecilia S. Hester, "Reminiscences of Hugh Reid Scott", The Heritage of Rockingham County 1983, Winston-Salem, North Carolina, Hunter Publishing Company, 1983), p. 550-551.

²⁷Rockingham County Marriage Bond Book.

²⁸"Grave of Mrs. Stephen A. Douglas Lies Few Miles East of Reidsville," Frank Warren, Reidsville Review, November 11, 1958., Grave inscription for Lucinda Martin in Settle Cemetery near Reidsville.

The Postmasters of Wentworth, North Carolina: 1794-1869

²⁹Rockingham County Marriage Bond Book.

30 List of Wentworth Postmasters

³¹Rockingham County Deed, Book 2G, p. 191 and 2N p. 171.

³²List of Wentworth Postmasters.

³³Rockingham County, Deed Book 2dI, p. 134.

³⁴Rockingham County, Will Book C, p. 69.

35 Greensboro Patriot, June 5, 1848.

³⁶William Emmett Reece, The Settle-Suttle Family, ed. by Fannie Lu Camp Fisher (Carrollton, Georgia; private, 1974), p. 686.

³⁷Hugh Reid Scott, "Reminiscences of Hugh Reid Scott", p. 550.

³⁸Caswell County Marriage Bonds, Register of Deeds Office, Yanceyville, North Carolina.

³⁹List of Wentworth Postmasters.

⁴⁰Reece, The Settle-Suttle Family, p. 686.

⁴¹List of Wentworth Postmasters.

⁴²Greensboro Patriot, February 21, 1838.

 $^{43} The\ Journal\ of\ Rockingham\ County\ History\ and\ Genealogy,\ Volume\ IX,\ Number\ 2,\ (December\ 1984),\ p.\ 84.$

44 Ibid., p. 85.

⁴⁵Greensboro Patriot, May 24, 1842.

¹⁶ Ellington Family Bible in possession of Mrs. Harry L. Fagg, Eden, N.C. Hereinafter cited as Ellington Family Bible.

⁴⁷Virginia Anderson Dodd, comp., *Henry County Virginia, Marriage Bonds* 1778-1849, Richmond, Virginia, 1953. The Rev. John Rich who performed the marriage had served as pastor to the Methodist-Episcopal Churches in Rockingham County in 1843.

¹⁸John Preston Ellington and Rufus Bruce Ellington are buried in the Methodist Church Cemetery at Wentworth alongside their parents. James Hardy Ellington who became a noted physician in Stokes County, is buried in the Scales family cemetery at Sandy Ridge, North Carolina. William W. Ellington is believed to be buried at the Ellington family cemetery located off of old Highway 87 (now Ashley Road) between Wentworth and Eden. See also the 1870 Census for Rockingham County, Wentworth Township, p. 366.

⁴⁹Wentworth Postmaster's list.

⁵⁰Rockingham County, Deed Book, 2P, p. 250 & p. 252.

⁵¹Rockingham County, Deed Book, 2X, p. 90.

52 1970 Census Rockingham County, p. 366.

⁵³Gravestone inscription for James D. Ellington.
 ⁵⁴Ann L. Backiel, "Thomas Anderson Ratliffe", The Heritage of Rockingham County, 1983", p. 513.

⁵⁵Anderson, Anderson & Irving Families, p. 214.

⁵⁶Wentworth Postmaster List.

⁵⁷Rockingham County, Deed Book 2W, p. 225.

Sconversation with the late Mrs. Garfield Wilson, Wentworth, North Carolina, January 1983.

Trancis B. C. Bradlee, Blockade Running During the Civil War and the effects of land and water transportation on the Confederacy (Philadelphia, The Porcupine Press, 1974), p. 834. Although Bradlee's book deals primarily with Confederate Blockade Running, a lengthy chapter is devoted to the history of the Confederate Post Office of which very little has been published. Also, (letter) James H. Hutson, Chief of Manuscript Division, the Library of Congress to Michael Perdue dated September 14, 1984. Hereinafter cited as Bradlee, Blockade Running.

⁶⁰Bradlee, Blockade Running, p. 280.

⁶¹Bradlee, Blockade Running, p. 283.

⁶²Bradlee, Blockade Running, p. 287.

⁶¹Conversation with Miss Nancy Withers, Wentworth, N.C., April 1980. Miss Withers is a granddaughter of Thomas Ratliffe. Rockingham County Commissioners Minutes November 9, 1876. (Letter) Mrs. Alice Craig Maclaren to Michael Perdue August 16, 1985. Mrs. Maclaren is also a granddaughter of Ratliffe.

⁶⁴Gravestone inscription for Thomas Ratliffe.

⁶⁵Wentworth Postmaster List.

⁶⁶Ellington Family Bible.

⁶⁷Local tradition. Various deeds note that William Ellington owned the hotel building periodically before and after the Civil War.

⁶⁸Greensboro Daily News January 31, 1921. Ellington's departure for Greensboro is uncertain for as late as April 7, 1873 he was appointed Clerk of the Wentworth Township Board of Trustees through August 1873. A letterhead found among the Dr. John R. Raine papers at Duke University lists Ellington as assistant cashier at the National Bank by February 1882.

⁶⁹Guilford County Marriage Bonds, 1884. County Register of Deeds Office, Greensboro,

 $^{70}\mathrm{Conversation}$ with Mrs. Harry Fagg Eden, North Carolina April, 1985. Mrs. Fagg is a grand-niece of Neil Ellington.

⁷¹Greensboro Daily News, January 31, 1921.

⁷²Gravestone inscriptions of Lucy Allen Raine in the Methodist Church Cemetery, Wentworth and of James Allen, in the Ellington Family Cemetery west of Wentworth. Conversation with Mrs. Gordon Siler, Eden, N.C. 1978.

⁷³Conversation with Mrs. Margaret Hancock Kerley, of Wentworth, a granddaughter of Mary Allen Hancock, (sister of Lucy Allen), April 1985.

⁷⁴Rockingham County, Death Record, Book 3, p. 587.

75 Rockingham County, Deed Book 2L, p. 548.

 $^{76}\mathrm{Conversation}$ with Mrs. Gordon Siler, May 1978. The Allen home passed through various hands and burned in 1949.

⁷⁷Rockingham County, Deed Book 2X, p. 90.

⁷⁸Wentworth Postmasters list.

⁷⁹Rockingham County, Marriage Records 1868-1896.

⁸⁰James R. Meador, "The 45th North Carolina Regiment", The Heritage of Rockingham County, p. 30, and local tradition.

⁸¹Dr. Raine's home, a Wentworth landmark, remained standing until 1966 when it was destroyed.

82 Wentworth Postmaster List.

 $^{83} \rm Letter$ from James A. Patterson to Lucy Raine dated May 25, 1885, Dr. John R. Raine papers, Duke University Library.

84 Gravestone inscription, Wentworth Methodist Church Cemetery.

⁸⁵Rockingham County Marriage Records Book 1868-1896.

⁸⁶Gravestone inscription, Wentworth Methodist Cemetery.

*The writer would like to express his thanks and appreciation to the following people who have contributed to this account; Frances I. Anderson, Dr. Lindley S. Butler, Robert W. Carter, Jr., Mrs. Lucile Reid Fagg, Mrs. Margaret Hancock Kerley, Darrell Lester, Mrs. Alice Craig Maclaren, Ms. Rita Maroney, Miss Maude E. Reynolds, deceased; Mrs. Ruth Ellington Siler, Mrs. Hattie D. Wilson, deceased; and Miss Nancy Lawson Withers.

A Brief History of the Dalton Family And The Hunters Part Three

by

Robert H. Dalton, M.D.

Notes by

Linda C. Vernon and Charles D. Rodenbough

Editors note: Robert Hunter Dalton was born February 21, 1805 on Beaver Island Creek in western Rockingham County, the son of Nickolas and Rachel Hunter Dalton. After completing medical school in Philadelphia he returned to Rockingham County to practice medicine. On January 6, 1832 he married Jane Martin Henderson and in 1835 the family moved to Alabama. In 1845 the Daltons moved to Aberdeen, Mississippi where the doctor practiced until 1867. After living for some years in Missouri and California, Dalton spent his last years in Tacoma, Washington where he died in January, 1900 nearly 95 years of age.

The narrative was written in 1878 at the request of his daughter, Mary Lou Dalton Brodnax of Rockingham County. The Dalton manuscript is in the collection of the Missouri Historical Society, St. Louis Missouri. The grammar, spelling and punctuation of the manuscript has been retained.

Part One of the manuscript was published in the December, 1984 issue of the Journal. Part Two was published in the June, 1985 Journal. In Part Three, Dr. Dalton concluded the narrative by relating the story of his mother's people, the Hunters.

The Hunters

As of a race they were of the nervo-sanguine temperament, tall, lean, active and athletic, with the finest auburn hair, so dark that it was almost black, eyes grey and piercing, beautiful florid complection and handsome proportion. They were ordinarily quiet, gentle people, seldom facetious or jesting, but pleasant and communicative and fluent in conversation.

I think Col. James Hunter was born in the north of Ireland and brought to this country by his parents among the Martins. Hendersons and others who settled in a colony in Virginia and afterwards in North Carolina about 1740.1 I never saw any of his brothers and but one of his sisters, wife of Col. May of the Revolution, who lived on Dan River above Eagle Falls a few miles. His brother, Samuel Hunter, removed to South Carolina where he raised a number of children, some of whom I knew. The brother, if I am not mistaken died early, but not until he had made his mark as a daring patriot, as may be seen by reference to Wheeler's History of North Carolina. His brother Henry Hunter lived and raised a family in Henry County not far from Alexander, Smith's River [Plantation], and I was well acquainted with two of his sons, Payton and Poworan. He was a brother-in law of the Seignior Peter Hairston and in early life was equal to him in wealth. My grandfather, William, how he went to Hillsboro with a file of men, (colored), his friend, Judge Henderson, who was a loyal judge then on the Bench, and taking him to the door, kicked him out, and how his brother William, when a relations and friends about the Martins and Hendersons who were a little shaky before the war, and finally became the best supporters of the Revolution.9

When the war came he entered as a major in Col. James Martin's regiment, his cousin, and, at the Battle of Guilford Court House, when the order came to retreat, he failed to hear it, but seeing the men begin to fall back he thought that they were running away and siezed a musket, he was beating them back with great fury when Col. Martin came up and explained. He was often laughed at about that. At one time during the war he was sent with dispatches to the Commander in Chief, General Washington, who was, at that time in New Jersey and I have heard him relate instances in connection with that long trip. Sam, his copper colored man, who was very intelligent, accompanied him, and I have often heard him tell wonderful things his master did on the way. After the war was over he fought Indians in several expeditions, and some of the battle scenes are freshin my mind now.

He was often a member of the Legislature and had much to do with the organization of the State government. 11

My grandfather lived just a mile from my father's on Beaver Island, on

one of the finest plantations in the whole country, and his residence was surrounded with a large yard, shaded with locusts and well set with bluegrass. It was a lovely place where I spent much of my easy time with James, 12 orphan son of Dr. James Hunter. My first rememberance of him was when he was old but he was even then a fine-looking man. He was fully six feet tall, spare and erect, but walked with a cane. The Irish brogue was distinct in his language which was fluent and earnest. He was a strict Presbyterian and held family prayer every night and morning while reading a Bible chapter and singing with my grandmother. His habits were very temperate though I have seen him take a glass with a friend. He was grave and dignified and seldom seemed to laugh. His library was large and



Tradition says this was the home of James Hunter on Beaver Island Creek. Recent investigations indicate that the house was probably built by a Hunter descendant a few years after his death. Photograph courtesy of Charles D. Rodenbough.

miscellaneous and, in the absence of company he was generally reading. I never saw him dressed otherwise than in black broadcloth and his linen was always fresh and clean-looking. Kindness and benevolence were striking traits of his character and was manifest by the lametations of the poor at his death, which was really regarded as a public calamity. His funeral was preached by Father Paisley, who married me, from the steps of his house and Mr. Pickard of Orange¹¹ to the largest congregation I ever saw on such an occasion; and right under them sat Thomas Henderson, Col. James Martin, Theopelus Lacy, 18 Sur, and Thomas Searcy, 17 and most of them were old and venerable men, with heads uncovered. He died in the spring of 1821 of pneumonia. His wife, who was my grandmother was Mary McFarland of Scotland, of the same colony, but my grandfather married her in Virginia. 19 She was a dear, good old lady of amiable disposition. I am sure that I never saw her in the least out of temper in my life. Being old and feeble and having lived with my grandfather for so many years and guided by his directions so long, she sank under the deprivation and died within a few months. They lie together in the cemetery on the hill.

They had a large family of children, John, James, Alexander, Samuel, Robert and Pleasant and Mary, Elizabeth and Rachel; all with dark auburn hair and fine florid skin, and all tall and well proportioned. I never knew but Samuel, Robert and Mary besides my mother; John and James were just grown, went to Tennessee and settled the land on which Nashville is now situated and were both killed by Indians. John left a widow who married Judge McNairy by which the McNairy family were made rich as all of that fine land fell into their hands. He left no heirs, hence the Father was joint heir with the widow, but that region in those days was almost inaccessible. he slept on his rights until he was probably barred by statute. The heirs of my grandfather did sue for it in 1827, but after sharp litigation failed. The estate, if it had been recovered, would have been immense, as the whole city was upon it. Alexander²² killed a man for insult, and then went to Natchez, a Spanish territory, where he became a successsful merchant and lived until after the death of his father in 1821, when, on his way to NC, and travelling in considerable style he died in Milledgeville, Ga. I saw the fine horses he left, brought to N.C. by Uncle Samuel, 33 his brother. He never married. The statute books of N.C. say that the killing was condoned by a public act through the interposition of his relative, Governor Martin.

Col. Samuel Hunter was a facsimile of his father and one of the finest speciment of a man and gentleman, in manners and physical proportions, I ever saw. It was actually pleasant to behold him. He married Rebecca Bruce of Guildford, daughter of Col. Bruce of Bruce's Cross Roads in Guildford, who was a wealthy, venerable old man whom I knew well. Uncle Sam lived at the Big Oak, now Hillsdale, ²⁵ was wealthy and owned a large body of land.

He was colonel in the War of 1812 and afterwards a member of the Legislature a number of times. In 1827 he removed to the West District of Tennessee and in a few years to Texas where he died very old and respected.

He was certainly a remarkable man and deserves more than a passing notice in this family sketch; but I can only take time to say that he was a fine gentleman and a perfect model of good manners. Like his father, he was seldom known to jest but often assumed a bland and pleasant smile in conversation. He was always easy and dignified in whatever company he might be, it was evident that everyone was impressed by his manners; and surely no man ever did take an undue liberty with him. He always dressed as fine as clothing could make him and, like all the rest of the family, he looked like he had just bathed and come out of a banbox. Though tender and sensitive, his courage and firmness indomitable, so much so that an adversary would quail under his gaze.



This house on the east side of Beaver Island Creek is believed to have been built by Dr. Robert Hunter shortly before his death in 1812. Photograph courtesy of Robert W. Carter, Jr.

Mr. Robert Hunter²⁶ after whom I was named, was a tall, active and athletic man with deep auburn hair, fine florid complection, with stronger features than his brother Samuel. For a young practioneer he was very successful and popular, and was making money and fame rapidily when he died at the age of 28.

He married Fannie, 27 the daughter of Col. James Martin of Snow Creek and settled a mile east of his father's where he was fitting up a beautiful place and living handsomely when he lost his life by an accident. Like many young men of those times, he was fond of the chase and kept a fine pack of fox hounds among which was a favorite track dog taught to stay by him as the chase was going on, but skillful in scenting out the track when the pack came to a halt. While in full chase one morning, and passing through a clearing close to Thomas Searcy's, beyond Dan River, some curs attacked this dog when a breach of his shotgun went off, emptying the whole load through his right breast. Negroes on the clearing were standing by and saw him fall, rise up, lean on the gun and fall again. He was dead when they reached him. I can never forget the horrible scene at our house., At nine o'clock in the morning, when all the family were in the house and vard, Dick, my grandfather's foreman appeared on the hill beyond the creek in front of us, exclaiming in a loud voice 'Dr. Hunter is dead. Shot himself in a chase this morning near Tom Searcy's' It happpened that morning, ten miles off and near the river, and the news was brough to us by nine o'clock. As soon as Dick had made the announcement he turned and ran back our of sight. My poor mother, I never can forget her agony and screams. As he lay in the parlor before burial I saw, with my mother, the great hole in his breast, and I now realize the awful feeling I had and the rushing lamentations of the dear ones around. The concourse at his burial was immense and I never saw grief on any such occasion. The whole country seemed to feel it had lost a friend and benefactor. He left two sons, James and Robert, both now dead. I was with James at my grandfather's where the family lived until the boys were old enough to go off to Chapel Hill. They were fine boy, James, my friend and companion, and Robert my student and successor at Livingston, Ala., where he died. James like myself, went into the late war, from Ibion, Tenn, and died in prison at Alton, Ill., of cruelty and neglect. Aunt Fannie never married again.

Pleasant Hunter the youngest child, was said to have been very much like his brothers; he went to Louisville, Alexandria, before I was born, became a merchant, married and raised a family and made a fortune. None of his children have I ever seen, but I have heard of them as highly respectable in later years. His hair was very dark.

Mary Hunter,20 much older than my mother, married Wm. Dearing on

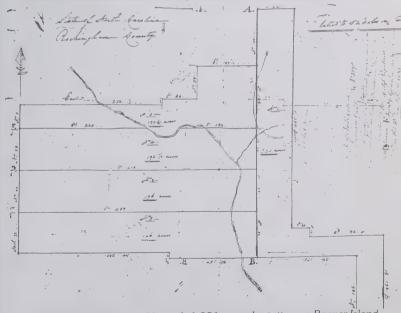


Pleasant Henderson Hunter (1785-1830), uncle of Dr. Robert Hunter Dalton. Hunter settled in Alexandria, Louisiana where he became a planter and merchant. From Walter Marvin Hunter. The Hunters of Bedford County, Virginia, (Polyanthos, Cottonport, Louisiana, 1973.).

Dan River, nine miles from Madison, who was full-handed and respected as a citizen. I was often at his house. He had many children, all of whom went to Alabama when grown and became rich. Aleck and Edmund were my class mates in Horace and Greek Ijora, though they were grown and I was a boy of seventeen only. Aunt Mary was my patient at Madison when she died.

Elizabeth Hunter³⁰ died before maturity.

The Hunters, as a race, were very unlike the Daltons. Their temperament was nervo-sanguine while the Daltons were of the bilious lymphastic type. They were all tall and moderately thin while the Daltons were, as a type, low, round and rather bulky, and their skin, while fair, by no means rosy like the Hunters. The Hunters were also inclined to dress in observance of fashionable etiquette, while the Daltons were democratic. The Hunters were grave, dignified and earnest; the Daltons were humorous, witty and familiar at all times. The Hunters were quick and irascible, dangerous when wronged or assiled. The Daltons were patient and forbearing, easy to reconsile. To illustrate the temperament of the Hunters. I will relate an ancedote of my grandfather. About two miles south of his residence, he had erected, at his own expense, a large church or meeting-house, in the pine woods in which he allowed preaching by all denominations provided they should obtain his consent and key, and he would usually attend the service as an auditor. There was an awful controversialist of the Baptist persuastion named William Davis,31 of Pittsylvania -- very much such a fellow as Martin Luther, I suppose - who got permission to preach there, and of course my grandfather was there to hear him, not knowing his general character. A large congregation was present to hear the famous champion, and 'The Old Colonel' took his seat as usual, just in front of the pulpit. After reading the text, singing and a long prayer, Davis opened first on the Roman Catholics and dealt them a crushing blow. And that delighted my grandfather as was evident from his manner and the interest he took in the arguement. Next he belabored the Episcopalians, at which he was also pleased. Then the Methodists were dealt with on awful terms of vindicative and ridicule, and that evidently delighted the old gentleman and he even smiled with approval and doubtless had come to the conclusion that Davis was a very great man. But, unfortunately, after leaving the Methodists he immediately pitched into John Knox and his followers and the whole concern and was beginning to immolate them when suddenly my grandfather sprang to his feet, branished his cane and exclaimed in a loud voice 'Come down from there you lying wretch;' he was advancing with uplifted arm, and suiting his act to his words 'I will maul you out', when old man Crump³² sitting near, seized the stick and while they were struggling for it, the old man slid down from the pulpit and walked hastily down the aisle and out the door, shaking off the dust from his feet. I suppose. I will relate another incident equally illustrative. When Andrew Jackson lived and studied law at Guildford Court House where he had hunted and chased fox with my grandfather for several years, and they were very intimate and friendly. It so happenned that on a mild, beautiful evening in 1815 my grandfather, his overseer, Capt. Ward, 34 brother Sam and myself, a boy 9 years old, were sitting on the south piazza discussing plantation affairs at a time when everybody was on tiptoes to hear from New Orleans, supposed to be in grave danger of capture by Packingham and our little army captured, which was commanded by General Jackson. Suddenly a man, well mounted, flung open the big gate on the hill, and, without taking time to shut it, came galloping down the hill toward the yard gate; and as he came my grandfather recognized him as Alexander Strong Martin and exclaimed: 'It is Alex Martin, Bad news, I fear. Some of the kin are dead.' In an instant Alex Martin pulled up at the vard gate, and waving his hat cried out 'General Jackson met the British below New Orleans, killed Packingham and 8,000 men, losing but one man.'



Surveyors plat of James Hunter's 1,051 acre plantation on Beaver Island Creek. The land was surveyed by Abraham Philips in July 1822 for division

among the Hunter heirs.

In the twinkling of an eye the old man rose to his feet, jumping, cavorting, and slamming the floor with his cane 'Damn the British. Andy Jackson, I always knew he would be a great man some day. I knew if Andy Jackson ever met them he would give them hell. Hurrah for Andy Jackson.' I was so alarmed that I jumped out on the grass, while my grandmother ran out beseeching my brother and Ward to hold him, but not until he had broken his cane and exhausted himself. In the next moment he was lying on my grandmother's bed scarcely able to breathe; and then I left for home, in great trepediation to tell the news. I remember that grandmother was deeply concerned afterward, fearing that he had lost his religion.

This epitone of my family history is done, and though labor has been pleasant, I have shed many tears in passing over the scenes and associations of my early career, surrounded by the living, loved ones who were then a part of my very existence. An as I have wept over the dear objects of my youthful affections, now silent in the bosom of death, the sweet home of my childhood has loomed up in my view with all vivid reality of its once living charms.

I have stood again on those lofty hills in magic view of the Pilot, Alleghany and Blue Ridge mountains, pointing heavenward to proclaim the glory and majesty of God, and lived over again the purest and happiest years of my life; for there, in that beautiful, sequestered place, I experienced the joys, the loves, the sorrows and the aspirations of my youthful heart; and there since time has whitened my locks, and old age is quenching the fires of my life, my mind often dwells with holy and religious feeling among the scenes incidents and friends of my childhood.

The End

Notes

¹Hunter was born April 8, 1740 and died January 30, 1821 according to the dates on his tombstone and the dates recorded in the family Bible. There is some controversy as to the name of his parents but most family researchers think he was the son of Alexander Hunter who left a will in Bedford County, Virginia, dated December 25, 1767 and probated March 22, 1768, naming among his heirs, son James Hunter.

²Elizabeth Hunter May, wife of Col. John May, was born ca. 1760 and died in 1848. She is probably buried at the Wesley Chapel Methodist Church Cemetery in Rockingham County, near her husband and son, but no tombstone marks her grave. There is some confusion about Elizabeth being a sister to James Hunter. See Walter Marvin Hunter, *The Hunters of Bedford County. Virginia*, (Polyanthos, Cottonport, Louisiana, 1973),52. Hereinafter cited as W.M. Hunter, *The Hunters*.

³4Alexander Hunter married Martha Hairston in Bedford County, Virginia in 1769. They were the parents of several children, two of whom were Payton and Powotan (1779-1835). Martha was the daughter of Robert and Ruth Stovall Hairston.

⁴Peter Hairston (1752-1832) married Alcey Perkins (1776-1814) in 1782 and was recognized as one of the largest landowners in the area.

⁵Here he means James Hunter.

⁶There is no other record that James Hunter had a brother named William. For a further explanation of this error see W.M. Hunter, *The Hunters*, 52-54.

 $^7\mathrm{Herman}$ Husbands, a native of Pennsylvania, was a leader of the Regulators during the pre-Revolution era.

⁸This is probably a reference to Judge Richard Henderson of Granville County, North Carolina.

⁹There are several accounts of this incident reported by noted historians. In one account Hunter (no first name given) is described as an active and zealous Whig who was captured and ordered to executed but escaped with only a shot in his shoulder. Another account states that Andrew Hunter of St. Davids was the chief actor in this incident. See, W.M. Hunter, *The Hunters*, 53-54.

¹⁰In 1776 James Martin (1742-1834) was commissioned Colonel of the Guilford County Regiment of the North Carolina Militia. His mother was Jane Hunter Martin and was a sister to the father of James Hunter.

¹¹Hunter was a member of the Legislature 1777-1782 representing Guilford County. Although this statement was true of his Martin cousins, it is an exaggeration when applied to Hunter.

¹² This was a first cousin, James Hunter, who was the son of Dr. Robert Hunter (not James). Dr. Hunter died in a hunting accident in 1812.

¹³William D. Paisley was ordained as a Presbyterian minister in 1798. At the time of Hunter's death he was the minister at Bethel Church in Guilford County. In 1825 he was the founding minister of the First Presbyterian Church in Greensboro. See Herbert S. Turner, *The Dreamer-Archibald Debow Murphey*, p. 103.

¹⁴Rev. John Pickard was the minister at Speedwell Presbyterian Church in southeastern Rockingham County from 1818-1830.

¹⁵Thomas Henderson (1753-1821), a native of Granville County, North Carolina, married Jane Martin of Rockingham County in 1778, a sister of James and Alexander Martin. They resided on Dan River in Rockingham County. Their plantation on the south side of the river, lay between Jacob's and Hogans Creeks.

He represented Guilford County at the Third Provincial Congress of North Carolina held in Hillsborough in August 1775. When Rockingham County was formed by an act of the State Legislature in December 1785, he served as one of the commissioners. He was elected Clerk of Court at the first session of Rockingham County Court which was held in Febuary 1786.

¹⁶A native of Pittsylvania County, Virginia, Lacy moved at an early age with his mother, brothers and sister to land on the Dan River in what is now Rockingham County. Most of the family migrated to Alabama. He was active in politics as an Anti-Federalist, running repeatedly and unsuccessfully for Congress.

¹⁷Thomas Searcy (1766-1841) married Ann Martin (1772-1831), daughter of Col. James Martin. They are buried in a family cemetery in Huntsville Township in Rockingham County.

¹⁸ According to the family Bible she was born February 3, 1743 and died May 29, 1821.
¹⁹ The date of the marriage is recorded in the family Bible as 13th of September, 1762.

²⁰The Bible entry states that he was born on Friday half after five 1769 in the morning, killed by the Indians near Nashville the 20th of January, 1789. There is a will recorded in Davidson County, Tennessee for a John Hunter dated March 27, 1788 which was probated in April 1789 in which he leaves his land to his wife Mary Hunter.

²¹James Hunter was born 4th of March at one O'Clock in the morning 1769 and killed near Comb Island River in Tennessee 27th of December 1788. It is evident that James and his brother John were both not born the same year, however, the dates are given as written the Rible.

²²The Bible shows his birth date as the 8th of November 3 O'Clock on Sunday 1772 and that he died on the 26th of December 1821 after 11 O'Clock in the morning.

 23 The sixth child, Samuel was born February 4th on Sunday between 6 and 7 O' Clock in the morning 1777 and departed this life Thursday 22nd of October 1846 about 10 O' Clock p.m. He and his wife were the parents of 12 children.

²⁴Charles Bruce of Guilford County. The site of Bruce's Cross Roads is now Summerfield.

²⁵Hillsdale is located three miles east of Summerfield in north central Guilford County.

 26 The family Bible states he was born on Sunday night about 10 O'Clock the 16th of June 1782 and killed by his own gun in his hands stricking a dog 13 March 1812.

²⁷According to the Col. James Martin Family Bible, Fannie was born February 13, 1784.
She married Dr. Robert Huner in Stokes County January 23, 1809. The Robert Hunter house still stands east of Beaver Island Creek.

²⁸In the Bible his birth is given as June 18th about 10 or 11 O'Clock 1785 and died 22 November 1830. He was the youngest son and next to the youngest child. Nancy, the youngest child is not mentioned by Dr. Dalton, but she was born the 29th of November 1788. Her death date is not recorded in the Bible but she evidently died at an early age.

²⁹The Bible record gives her birth date as September 1st on Tuesday between 10 and 11 O'Clock 1763, thus making her the oldest child. Her death is recorded as the 22nd day of February 1833. He and her husband are buried in a family cemetery in Huntsville Township near the Duke Power Dam. Note the fight described in the first part of Dr. Dalton's recollections between his brother Samuel and the son of his Aunt Mary Dearing.

 30 The seventh child, Elizabeth was born September the $3\,\mathrm{rd}$ on Friday 1779 and died June 1787.

 $^{31} \rm Elder$ William Davis served as pastor of the Matrimony (Primitive) Baptist Church in Rockingham County from 1800 until his death on August 13, 1836.

³²The Crumps were early settlers on Beaver Island Creek.

³³Andrew Jackson was admitted to the Bar in Rockingham County. He was also admitted to the Bars of Guilford and Surry Counties.

 34 This may be a reference to a William Ward who appear on the 1815 Rockingham County Tax List in Capt. Ayers District. There is also a marriage bond in Rockingham County for

A Brief History of the Dalton Family and the Hunters, Part Three

William Ward and Sally Airs dated June 5, 1815 with Samuel Dalton, Jr. as bondsman. 35 Edward Pakenham

³⁶A kinsman, Alexander Strong Martin, was the natural son of Gov. Alexander Martin and Elizabeth Strong. He was born July 8, 1787 and died October 18, 1864. By 1850 he was living in Holms County, Mississippi.

The Hunter-Dalton-Price Family Cemetery

Located on the James Hunter homeplace, three miles northwest of Mayodan on S.R. 1325. Recorded in 1985 by Linda C. Vernon and Leonora W. Sutton. Compiled by Peggy Osborne.

NAME	DEATH DATE	REMARKS
DALTON Ewell Galahue at least two graves marked with field rock	6 March 1895	b 9 December, 1801
Gabriel Hunter	27 January, 1896	b 27 January, 1871 Doctor
Leander H.	11 February, 1894	b 25 September, 1803
N. Matilda	18 July, 1880	b 11 August, 1805
Nicholas	7 January, 1838	Age 67 years, 9 months, 28 days
Nicholas Hunter	17 September, 1862	b 26 August, 1817
Rachel	23 August, 1863	Age 89 years (wife of Nicholas)
Robert Ferdinand	20 May, 1878	b 27 January, 1847
Ruth Elizabeth	10 March, 1926	b 16 October, 1839
Sarah Strong	7 February, 1875	b 2 September, 1803
HUNTER James	30 January, 1821	b 8 April, 1740 Age 80 years 9 months 22 days
Mary	29 May, 1821	b 4 February, 1743 Age 78 years 3 months 25 days

The Hunter-Dalton-Price Family Cemetery

Robert	13 March, 1812	b 16 June, 1782 Doctor Age 29 years 7 months 27 days
JOHNSON Ethel Dalton	30 June, 1894	b 31 March, 1893
Ewell W.	1 October, 1963	b 14 November, 1901
George William	11 May, 1942	b 28 September, 1872
Ida Maude Dalton	26 June, 1956	b 6 September, 1875 w/o G.W. Johnson
Laura Elizabeth	9 December, 1984	b 24 March, 1908
Mary Scott	22 September, 1978	b 4 August, 1904
Robert Lee	4 March, 1983	b 29 March, 1900
Ruth Jugutha	9 December, 1983	b 23 August, 1894
MARTIN Nannie Lou	1924	b 1889
PRICE Anna Lee	12 M ay, 1947	b 15 August, 1867
Hallie McCabe	18 November, 1965	b 2 June, 1878 w/o Robert Brevard Price
Jno. H	July, 1923	b January, 1834
John Hampton	4 January, 1972	b 20 November, 1899 Attorney
John Randolph	7 July, 1969	b 24 July, 1880
Infant sons and daughters		Children of Robert B. and Hallie M. Price
Margaret Moir	13 October, 1966	b 16 March, 1877 w/o John Randolph Price
Mary H.	1933	b 1846

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Mary McCabe	17 October, 1972	b 28 November, 1897
Robert Brevard	13 March, 1950	b 20 May, 1875
Sallie Hester Lane	7 October, 1983	26 September, 1905
SCALES James	18 May, 1860	Age 80 years 1 month 7 days
WARD Anna Macon	16 September, 1965	b 9 February, 1912
Hattie P.	29 May, 1931	b 18 June, 1871 Mother
Walter Lee	21 January, 1921	b 21 February, 1868 son of David and Emily Moye Ward Father





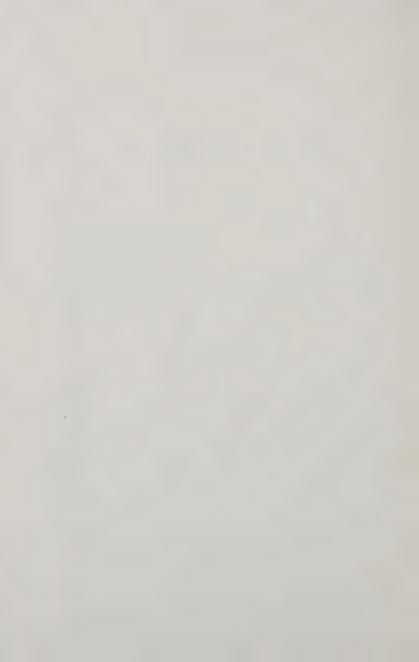
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The Rockingham County Historical Society, Inc.

The Journal of Rockingham County History and Genealogy

The journal is published semiannually in June and December by the Rockingham County Historical Society, Box 84, Wentworth, N.C. 27375. Members of the society, for which the annual dues are \$8.00 for an individual and \$12.00 for a family membership, receive the journal. Single issues may be purchased for \$3.50 per number plus 50 cents mailing charge.

Editorial Policy

The publication committee is interested in receiving articles on the history and genealogical source materials of Rockingham County and the adjacent area. The historical articles must be well written and thoroughly documented. Genealogical articles should consist of previously unpublished primary source materials pertaining to Rockingham County, such as abstracts of local records and edited diaries, letters, or church records. Papers on family history should not be submitted. All copy, including footnotes, should be typed double-space. Articles and correspondence should be sent to the editor: Robert W. Carter, Jr., Route 2 Box 392, Reidsville, N.C. 27320

Cover Illustration

Wentworth United Methodist Church was organized in 1836 and is celebrating its 150th anniversary this year. This picture was taken from a commemorative plate made ca. 1950.

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1836-1986

by Michael Perdue

The Wentworth United Methodist Church is located on West Main Street (N.C. Highway 65) in Wentworth and marks the unofficial western boundary of the state's smallest county seat. The Methodists were the first recorded denomination to establish a church in Wentworth, some forty years after the county seat was formed.

"Methodists as a general rule are extremely unconscious of their heritage. Unlike Moravians and Quakers, Methodists have not shown any interest in the laborious task of keeping detailed records." Unfortunately the Wentworth Church and most early Methodist churches in the county are no exception to that observation. Nevertheless, all Methodist churches in Rockingham County have a common heritage they can be proud of and hopefully other Methodist congregations will become more aware of their history.

In March 1986 the Wentworth Church was listed on the National Register of Historic Places, becoming the first church in Rockingham County to receive such a distinction.

Methodism comes to Rockingham County

The history of the Wentworth Church does not begin in 1836 with its first recorded deed. Seldom does one find an exact beginning of a local Methodist church. "Unless a church results from some division in a congregation which can be dated in church records, in most probability there is no current founding date. Churches simply are not and were not established at a particular point in time." The accepted organization dates for Methodist churches are those dates when the congregation purchases land for its first church, if such purchases are made. Most Methodist churches accept the dates of their first deed as organization dates although their actual beginnings will usually predate the deeds.

Exactly when the first elements of Methodism entered Rockingham County is not known. In May 1776 a conference held in Baltimore,

Maryland accorded North Carolina a position in the structure of the "Methodist Church." In that year the Carolina Circuit was formed to include North and South Carolina with no defined western boundary. Following the American Revolution, Methodism resumed a steady course of development. In 1778, North Carolina had been divided into three circuits; Roanoke, New Hope and Tar River. These circuits only covered the eastern half of North Carolina."

It is believed that as early as 1776 some circuit riders were preaching in private homes in present-day Surry, Stokes and Rockingham Counties.¹ Methodism grew quickly enough in the areas west of the existing circuits to support the creation of the Yadkin Circuit in 1780 which extended as far west as Buncombe County and as far south as the South Carolina line. In 1783 the Salisbury and Guilford Circuits were carved out the Yadkin Circuit. The first Annual Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church to be held in North Carolina was near Louisburg in Franklin County in 1785.¹ The influx of Methodists from Delaware and Maryland to North Carolina in the 1780's and 1790's greatly increased the numbers of fellow believers already established there.

The Guilford Circuit created in 1783 was composed of at least Guilford and Rockingham (formed out of Guilford in 1785) Counties. The first ministers appointed to the Guilford Circuit were Samuel Dudley and James Gibbons in 1783. Prior to 1801 the numerous circuits all over the colonies made up the General Conference and that was the extent of the church system. In 1801 the district concept was initiated whereby several adjoining circuits were placed into districts which then were placed under the auspicies of the General Conference. The Guilford, Salisbury, and the Yadkin Circuits were placed in the Salisbury District. The following year, 1802, saw the creation of the Virginia Methodist Episcopal Annual Conference which included both Virginia and North Carolina. The Virginia Conference was under the auspices of the General Conference but was over the districts, circuits and individual churches respectively within its bounds. Methodist still adhere to this division of church organization with a jurisdictional conference between the general and annual conferences.

It is not until the late eighteenth century that Rockingham County's role in Methodism is accounted for. In 1786 and 1787 the leading Methodist in America, Bishop Francis Asbury, stated in his diary that he preached at Newnam's Church, which was located in present-day Reidsville. After 1788 the church was known as Smith's Chapel which Asbury visited again in 1788 and 1799. The church disbanded in the 1830's. Issac Lowe, ordained a minister by Asbury in 1790, built a meeting house by 1795 on his land some three miles southeast of Reidsville. This was the beginning of Lowe's

Church recognized by many as being the "Mother church of Methodism in Rockingham County". In 1799 on Wolf Island Creek one mile northwest of Reidsville, Salem Church was organized. These first three churches were dominated by former residents of Maryland.⁸

By the early 1800s other Methodist societies (churches) were springing up in the eastern half of Rockingham County. In 1805 Hayse Meetinghouse was established in the Lawsonville area east of Reidsville and it may have been the forerunner of Penile Church organized in the same area in 1838 and disbanded in the early 1900s. By 1808 a society was meeting several miles north of Reidsville in the present-day Oregon Hill community. These meetings led to the organization of the Mount Carmel Church, the earliest deed for which is dated 1813. Some of the members of Mount Carmel became charter members of the Bethlehem Church in 1835, located near Town Creek about three miles southeast of present-day Eden, and the Leaksville Church in 1837.9

Methodism in the Wentworth Area

Exactly when the Methodists began meeting in the Wentworth area is not known. "Rockingham County's largest religious gathering in the early ninteenth century occurred at Wentworth in 1804 when the famed Methodist evangelist Lorenzo Dow preached to 1,500 people in the freezing air and falling snow for more than two hours." In August 1815 the Rockingham County Court appointed Benj. Greer overseer of the road from Grangers Old Field to the Wentworth Meetinghouse. In May 1820 the County court appointed Robert Cantrell overseer of the road near the Wentworth Meetinghouse to the forks near "Francis Wrights' old place" with the assistance of William Mobley, Asa Berry, Lewis Cole and Stephen Hardy. Later that month, James Barber was appointed overseer of the road from Granger's Old Field near Salem Church to the crossroads near the Wentworth Meetinghouse, with the help of Leven McCollester, John Cantrell and Thomas Pound, Jr. It appears that the Wentworth Meetinghouse evolved during the 1820s into a meeting place for a Methodist society. In 1895 Wentworth historian, Numa R. Reid, stated that the Wentworth Campground was located about two miles east of the courthouse near what later became the home of Samuel Roberts. The approximate location of the campground was near the intersection of N.C. Highway 87 and old Highway 87 (now Ashley Road).12 That the location of the meetinghouse and campground was one and the same is not known for certain, though the fragmentary evidence available suggests that this was the case.

The first reference of the Methodist meetings at or near the Wentworth Campground appears in the Quarterly Conference Minutes of the Guilford Circuit of 1833. At the first conference meeting of 1833 held at (Mt.) Carmel Church on April 6, 1833, four Rockingham County churches sent members to the conference; Lowe's, Carmel, Smith's and Rockingham Courthouse (Wentworth). When the fourth quarterly conference of 1834 convened at "Sandy Ridge" in Guilford County on November 22, 1834, the Wentworth (no longer cited as "Rockingham Courthouse") society contributed one dollar toward the circuit expenses for the first time recorded.

On May 30, 1835 at the first conference of the year at (Mt.) Carmel Church, Anderson B. Holderby, Thomas Wisdom and William Wisdom were appointed to a committee to superintend the building of a church at Wentworth. Anderson Holderby gave the Wentworth apportionment for the Guilford Circuit of four dollars. Apparently little resulted from this building committee for on October 10, 1835 the quarterly conference met not in Wentworth but at the Wentworth Campground. Carmel, Salem and Wentworth churches were the churches represented from Rockingham County. 15

The subject of establishing a church in Wentworth surfaced once again when the quarterly conference convened at Centre Church in Guilford County on July 9, 1836. Benton Field, Anderson Holderby and Thomas Wisdom were appointed to a building committee to superintend the building of a church in Wentworth. The next conference was held on September 15, 1836 at the Wentworth Campground, with Salem, Carmel, Bethlehem and Wentworth Churches represented. The status of the new church project at Wentworth is unclear, but it is possible that little had been done by September. 16

On October 1, 1836 the trustees of the Wentworth Church; Benton Field, George H. Holderby, Lloyd Waters, Joseph Holderby, Thomas G. Wisdom, Franklin Harris, William Wisdom, and Robert Martin, Jr., purchased of John Wall, Jr., for fifty dollars, Wentworth town lot 23...

bounded as follows. Beginning at a stake in Clabun (sic) Wall's line on the Main Street, thence South with Wall's line 16 poles to another stake, the corner of the ally, thence with that line South 85 degrees East 11 poles to the corner of lot no. 24 with that line North 16 poles to the other corner of lot no. 24, thence along the Main Street North 80 degrees West 11 poles to the first station containing one acre & 16 poles of land. 17

This lot was located some two hundred yards west of the county courthouse on the south side of Main street. Whether or not the church was built prior to or after the purchase is unknown.

With the purchase of the lot from John Wall in 1836, the Wentworth Methodist Episcopal Church had come into existence. The first recorded trustees of the Wentworth Church are names familiar in Rockingham County history. Rev. Benton Field (1797-1871) was a former pastor of the Virginia Conference who, after settling in Rockingham County, was responsible for the establishment of the Bethlehem Church in 1835 and the rapid growth of the Leaksville Church with which he became associated s As Field's name appears before the others in the 1836 deed it is likely that he was an official of the quarterly conference. Thomas G. Wisdom was also a likely conference official and resided on Wolf Island Creek in the vicinity of the Salem Church¹⁹ George H. Holderby (ca. 1807-1888) married Delilah Morehead, the sister of Governor John M. Morhead. William C. Wisdom, while no doubt related to Thomas, is virtually unknown. Joseph Holderby (1803-1875) was the Rockingham County Clerk of Court in the 1830s; he later moved to Reidsville and became prominent in the development of that town.21 Lloyd Waters (1797-1846) gave the first lot for the Bethlehem Church and was married to Ann Edwards, the daughter of Methodist minister George Edwards.21 Franklin Harris (1796-1878) was prominent among the Methodist circles in the county and in the 1840s would teach school in Wentworth.23 Robert Martin, Jr. (1784-1848) in 1836 was the Wentworth postmaster and a local merchant, whose daughter Martha would marry Sen. Stephen A. Douglas. His wife's nephew was Gov. David S. Reid.24

After being in the Yadkin District since 1808 the Guilford Circuit was placed back in the Salisbury District in February 1834. By the mid 1830s it had become apparent that the Virginia Conference could not continue spreading itself into North Carolina. Consequently in 1837 the Virginia Conference made the last appointments for charges in North Carolina. That same year the Rockingham County churches were removed from the Guilford Circuit and Salisbury District. These churches formed the new Rockingham Circuit of the Danville District. On January 31, 1838 the North Carolina Conference was formed at Greensboro and the Rockingham Circuit and much of the Danville District was absorbed into the new conference which included all of eastern and piedmont North Carolina.

The first pastor appointed to the Guilford Circuit which included the established Wentworth Church in 1836 was David B. Nicholson (1809-1866) who served from 1836 until 1838. William Anderson (1802-1859) was appointed to the Rockingham Circuit in January 1838 and was

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appointed as a supply pastor there in 1846 and again as pastor for 1849. William W. Turner (1812-1848) was appointed in January 1840. The Rockingham Circuit was one of Turner's first appointments. Obviously the rigors that accompanied a circuit rider's life were too much for Turner who died September 4, 1846 at the age of thirty-three.²⁷

In December 1840 William Warren Albea (1810-1896) was appointed to the Rockingham Circuit. A notebook of Albea's covering the years 1833-1848 mentions his two years on the circuit. Albea mentions preaching at Bethlehem nineteen times in 1841, Carmel ten times in 1842, Penile twenty one times in 1842, Salem seventeen times in 1842. Sharon, near present-day Ruffin, eight times in 1842 and Wentworth fourteen times in 1842. The Rev. Daniel Field, a son of Rev. Benton Field, and a prominent local pastor described Rev. Albea as "...a young man of good preaching ability, sound in doctrine, loyal to his church, a good revivalist and a most Godly man. His success in the ministry was as much attributable to his faithful pastoral visiting as to his earnest preaching. He was of cheerful desposition, a good converstionalist and urbane in manners; hence always a welcome guest in every home."

In 1841 Revs. Albea and John Rich (1815-1851) were appointed to the circuit for the year 1842 and it was through their joint efforts that the declining membership of the Rockingham Circuit was reversed. From 1838 to 1840 the circuit membership had dropped from 308 to 241. In 1842 Albea and Rich were able to add 88 members to the circuit roll. Rich alone was appointed for the year 1843. The Mt. Carmel Church was the scene of a tremendous revival in 1843 under the leadership of Rev. Rich at which over 150 persons made professions of faith. Among those who were converted at Mt. Carmel was eighteen year old Numa Fletcher Reid, of whom much will be noted later. In 1843 the membership of the circuit was increased by 110. The zeal in which Rich conducted his ministry likely consumed himself as he died in October 1851 at age thirty-six. 2015

James D. Lumsden followed Rich as pastor for the year 1844. The membership growth initiated by Albea and Rich continued under Lumsden. When he was appointed to the Stokes Circuit in 1844 for the year 1845, he left the Rockingham Circuit with 510 white members. Rev. William Closs (1809-1882) followed for the year 1845 and Philmer W. Archer and Thomas S. Cassodey served during 1846. It was during this year that the circuit reached its peak of 544 white members, but the black membership dropped neary fifty percent. The Rockingham Circuit was Thomas Cassodey's first appointment, but it also was one of his last for in 1850 he died at age thirty-three. Clearly the life of a circuit pastor was at times miserable and overtaxing as many early pastors lived no longer than

thirty or forty years.33

At the 1849 Annual Conference an appointee to the Rockingham Circuit was not selected for reasons unknown. The conference instead selected a local pastor who wished to be appointed to his home circuit, from which he had received in 1847 his license to preach. He was Numa Fletcher Reid (1825-1873) who would become one of the most noted ministers in Rockingham County history. He was the son and grandson of Methodist ministers, James Reid and George Edwards respectively. Reid had become a school teacher in 1842 at Thompsonville, southeast of Reidsville. In 1844 Reid moved west of Reidsville where he taught school at Salem Church in a log building near the sanctuary. He was the Rockingham Church in a log building near the sanctuary.

In 1845 Reid began an association with the village of Wentworth that he maintained until his death. Reid opened an academy in Wentworth with Franklin Harris, a trustee of the Wentworth Church and a graduate of Emory and Henry College. After the first year at Wentworth Reid continued to operate the academy alone and the excellent reputation of the school became widely known. In 1846 Numa Reid married Ann Eliza Wright, a daughter of James Wright, a Wentworth tavernkeeper. As no records from Wentworth Church have survived from the 1830s and 1840s, little is known about the church's relation with the academy. During the 1840s a frame two room school house was erected west of the church but on the church property. This school building was likely the site of Reid's academy. Reid continued teaching until his appointment as pastor of the Rockingham Circuit in 1849.

In Reid's biography of *Life Sermons and Speeches of Rev. Numa F. Reid. D.D.*, Rev. John W. Lewis, an uncle of Reid's by marriage, wrote about his nephew's appointment to the Rockingham Circuit.

He (Reid) entered at once upon his work in this new relation as pastor, which was destined. . . to be a glorious success. . . He was well received on every part of the circuit and applied himself diligently to his work. His labors on Wentworth Circuit (which replaced the Rockingham in 1850) were greatly blessed to the edification and building up of the church. (After being reappointed to the circuit in 1850, Reid). . . entered upon his labors with renewed zeal and energy. . . He held an interesting camp meeting this year (probably 1851) near the town of Madison which resulted in the conversion of a number of souls and quite a number of accessions to the Church. He held protracted meetings at nearly all of his appointments. . . many souls were converted and added to the Lord. 38

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Reid seems to have been the first pastor whose residence was in Wentworth. He lived with his wife's family, the James Wrights, whose tavern was on Main Street.³⁹

After Reid's admittance into full connection with the North Carolina Conference in 1851, he was appointed to the Tar River Circuit. Hittle is known about the Wentworth Church following Reid's departure. Rev. David W. Doub, a nephew of the noted North Carolina Methodist minister Peter Doub, was assigned to the Wentworth Circuit for 1852. During 1853 William Anderson served as a supply pastor for Rev. Doub. Joshua Bethel (? - 1863) who at one time served as president of Greensboro (Female) College, came to the Wentworth Circuit for 1854. William Anderson continued as a supply for 1854 and 1855.

By this time the 1836 sanctuary was inadequate for the growing Wentworth congregation. Also, the originial church lot of one acre and sixteen poles was inadequate with the construction of the academy building on the church property. With no room to expand or have a cemetery the Wentworth congregation decided to purchase a new site for their church. In 1857 Rev. Alfred Norman was assigned to the Wentworth circuit for 1858. This minister was one of exceptional abilities and he encouraged the Wentworth congregation to raise the necessary funds for a new church.

On March 30, 1859 the Wentworth Church trustees; James Q. Montgomery, Nicholas Felts, Levin Miner, James D. Ellington, Turner W. Patterson, Franklin Harris, Richard Thomas Perryman Jones, John Gunn and Walter B. Johnson purchased of Richard A. Ellington, a member of the Wentworth Church, for one dollar a lot on the west end of Wentworth on the south side of Main Street described as...

Beginning at a stone on the side of the said road (Main Street); thence 60 deg. West 13 poles & 3 links with said road, to a red oak; thence South 30 deg. West 22½ poles to a dogwood in Levin Miner's line; Thence East with said line (Miner's) 15 poles to a Red Oak; thence North 30 deg. East 15 poles to the first station and contains one acre & 99 poles more or less of land.

What became of the sanctuary? The answer is not clear. In a deed dated only "1859" James Q. Montgomery sold to Dr. John W. Ellington, a local physician, the section of Wentworth lot 23 on which the old church stood for one hundred dollars. The section of lot 23 on which the academy stood was not included in the transaction. In a deed dated January 7, 1859 Dr. Ellington sold the property to I. Browder Whittemore for \$125.00...

...the old church House with a privilege of egress, ingress and regress to take and carry away the same, also eight feet on the west end of the church lot of land extending from the street along the line next to the academy lot to said Whittemore's land said church lot of which eight is hereby conveyed being in Wentworth lying on the street between the lot formerly owned by (Dr.) Thomas W. Keen (lot 24) and the academy lot (the remainder of lot 23)... It is understood that said Whittemore is to take the church house off the lot on which it now stands.⁴⁶

It seems strange that the old church was sold prior to the purchase of the new church site. Was James Q. Montgomery acting on behalf of the church when he sold the sanctuary to Dr. Ellington? Montgomery was a church trustee, but that fact does not explain the absence of the names of the other trustees on the deed. Perhaps Montgomery purchased the sanctuary from the church, but no deed for such a transaction was recorded. Obviously the old church was removed sometime after Dr. Ellington sold the lot to I.B. Whittemore. Eventually the church lot was absorbed into neighboring lot 24. In 1867 Montgomery and Levin Miner sold the remainder of lot 23 on which the academy stood to the trustees of the Wentworth Male Academy. That the church still held title to that section of lot 23 in 1867 is not clear. Moreover, it is unclear if Montgomery and Miner, who were church trustees, were acting on behalf of the church in the 1867 deed or if they were acting in their own behalf

Another mystery is the cemetery for the 1836 sanctuary. No record of one existing at the old church have ever surfaced. In 1858 when the young son of Rev. Norman died the remains were interred in the Ellington Family Cemetery one mile west of Wentworth. Had a cemetery existed at the old church it would seem likely that the remains would have been interred there, unless the plans for moving to a new site were well underway.

The trustees of the Wentworth Church in 1859 were the nucleus of the Wentworth community. James Q. Montgomery, who resided on Main Street, was a prominent landowner in the area for several years. Nicholas Felts came to Wentworth around 1850 and owned several large tracts of land around Wentworth as well as being a steward of the Wentworth Circuit. Levin Miner operated a grist mill south of the old church and was a prominent citizen. Miner and Felts married sisters and when Miner's wife died in 1853, he married another sister. James D. Ellington (1812-1888) had been the Wentworth postmaster for several years, a local tobacconist, and a church trustee for number of years as well. Turner Whitfield Patterson married into the Allen family of Wentworth and eventually became the only Republican sheriff in Rockingham County during

Reconstruction. Franklin Harris, as mentioned before, was a church trustee in 1836 and a leading Methodist in the county. Richard Thomas Perryman Jones (1820-1900) was a graduate of the University of North Carolina (1843) and a private school teacher. John Gunn (1806-1869) was a trustee of the Salem Church during the 1840s and after moving two miles northwest of Wentworth constructed a fine two story home in the 1850s. Walter B. Johnson (ca 1817 - after 1859) was the county jailer and resided in a dwelling on the west side of the county courthouse.

Construction soon commenced on the new sanctuary on the former Ellington lot. Tradition in the Ellington and Patterson families relates that Turner W. Patterson cut the lumber for the new church off of his property and boarded the laborers who worked on the church as well. In a letter to the Raleigh Christian Advocate, the organ of the North Carolina Conference, dated September 1859, Rev. Norman mentioned a camp meeting at Mt. Carmel Church in August and concluded his letter by writing. . .

We have a fine new church nearly finished at Wentworth; and another will be done at Leaksville by the winter and a fine new shelter at Mount Carmel which will hold an immense crowd at future camp meetings.⁵⁸

Another letter from Rev. Norman to the *Advocate* on November 6, 1859 recounted the long awaited event.

The new church at Wentworth was dedicated last Sunday (October 30). Bro. N.H.D. Wilson preached an appropriate and able sermon to a large congregation after which \$500.00, the amount needed to pay on it, was raised on the spot. The building is large and commodious, the very best owned by any denomination in Rockingham County.

Norman also went on to write that the "large and new church" at Leaksville was to be completed in the Spring of 1860.69

The completed sanctuary occupied a slight knoll in a bend of Main street at the western approach of Wentworth. The frame structure rested on rock foundation. Atop the church was a small open bell tower that held the bell that continues to call worshipers today. A shingle roof covered the sanctuary. There were two front doors; the men entered through the northwest door, the ladies used the northeast door, a partition extended from the north (facade) wall to in front of the pulpit segregating the men and women throughout the services. Over the front doors along the entire north wall ran a gallery for the use of slaves who were members of the church. The

only entrance to the gallery was through an outside entrance on the west wall of the church then up an enclosed stairway to the gallery pews. Supporting the balcony was a huge central support post identical to one located almost in front of the pulpit which supported the ceiling. The appearance of the chancel is unknown, but was likely a small square platform with a short surrounding rail. The sanctuary was lighted by eight large windows of identical size; three each on the east and west sides and two on the south wall (one on each side of the pulpit). Two smaller windows in the gallery were on the north side with one over each front door. The walls were of plaster with a three foot high wainscotting around the base of the walls. The pine pews were of simple construction and satined a mahogany shade.

The cemetery was located directly behind the church across a semicircular driveway. The earliest grave in the cemetery is for Priscilla Miner, the wife of Levin Miner, who died in 1853. The fact that the Miner grave predates the new church suggests that perhaps Levin Miner owned the property in 1853 or that the grave was moved to the cemetery after the new church was constructed. The first known grave placed in the new cemetery directly dated from 1863. 62

As early as 1859 a parsonage for the Wentworth Circuit was located in a one story house just east of the new church. It is known that Rev. Norman resided in that building during his pastorate. No other details regarding the building's origins or further use have been found. If the "parsonage" was used by subsequent pastors it was used only until the early 1870s. 63

In December 1859 David Rasbury Bruton (ca 1829-1895) was assigned to the Wentworth Circuit. 64 The 1860 census lists Bruton, his wife Margaret and infant daughter Sarah as living in Wentworth. 65 In January 1860 Bruton issued the preaching schedule of the Wentworth Circuit for the following month. . 665

January 22 - Mt. Carmel January 29 - Leaksville

February 2 - Wesley Chapel

February 3 - Bethelehem

February 5 - Wentworth

February 8 - Shady Grove

February 10 - Privilege

February 12 - Madison

February 18 - Salem

February 19 - Lowe's

February 21 - Penile

February 22 - K.S. House

February 23 - Union

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In a letter dated September 1860 Rev. Bruton noted that during the last month's revivals, fifty souls were converted and some thirty-five people were added to the circuit roll, a new society (church) was organized, one new church was completed and dedicated (probably the Leaksville Church), another church nearly completed and another church projected. In 1861 Rev. Clarendon Martin Pepper (1830-1895) was assigned to the Wentworth Circuit. In 1861 the Wentworth Circuit was split into two parts. The Wentworth Circuit continued to exist over the eastern half of the county, while the new Madison Circuit took over the western half of the county including the Leaksville, Madison, and Wesley Chapel Churches among others. Rev. Bruton assumed charge of the Madison Circuit. Rev. Pepper alone was returned to the Wentworth Circuit for 1863.







(Top Left) The earliest known picture of the Wentworth Church taken about 1900 from the cemetery. Photograph courtesy Michael Perdue. (Top Right) Rev. Clarendon M. Pepper (1830-1895). Minister of the Wentworth Circuit 1861-1863. Sketch by Ann O. Rich based on a photograph in possession of Ellen Pepper Tilley. (Bottom Left) Rev. Numa F. Reid (1825-1873), Minister of the Wentworth church 1849-1851. Photography courtesy of Michael Perdue.

Clarendon M. Pepper was born in Germanton, Stokes County, N.C. and received his education in Germanton, Clemmonsville in Forsyth County and lastly at Emory and Henry College in Virginia. While a student at Emory and Henry, Pepper wrote his father. . .

I have never anticipated a long life, and I have often thought that it was hardly worth while for me to exert myself in trying to make something of myself, but I have resolved to try and be useful while I live, and to consider it my greatest business to do good to others and to live myself as I well wish I had when I come to die. I have long thought it would be my duty to be a public speaker. 69

That Clarendon Pepper was useful while he lived is an understatement. Between the 1862 and 1863 Annual Conferences, Pepper added more members to the circuit (152) in one year than any other prior pastor. In a letter to his father dated November 5, 1863, Rev. Pepper wrote, ... on this circuit I have been having some extensive revivals of religion. I have received into the church nearly a hundred members this summer and fall...We expect to move from this place (Wentworth) somewhere in December. ...

It was Pepper's duty to conduct the funerals of many fallen Confederate soldiers. The war greatly affected the Wentworth area especially with the story of the George D. Boyd family. Boyd was a prominent farmer who lived several miles south of Wentworth and had served in the state senate. He lost three of his four sons in the war: Capt. John H. Boyd, 21st N.C. Regiment died in Richmond on August 28, 1861; Lt. George F. Boyd, 45th N.C. Regiment, killed at Gettysburg July 1, 1863 and Col. Samuel H. Boyd, 45th N.C. Regiment, killed at Spotsylvania, Virginia May 19, 1864. When the sons died at Richmond and Spotsylvania the tradition states that Mr. Boyd would hitch up a wagon and bring back the bodies of his sons. Funerals were held at the Wentworth Church with burials in the cemetery. Rev. Numa F. Reid conducted these funerals. Boyd erected large, marble shafts for the two sons whose bodies were recovered and another shaft in memory of the son who died at Gettysburg and whose body was lost. When Boyd died in 1886, he was buried alongside his sons.

In 1868 John W. Lewis (ca. 1810-1885), an influential member of the North Carolina Conference was appointed to the Wentworth Circuit for the year 1869. It was during Lewis' pastorate that the congregation at Ruffin, apparently active in the late 1860s, built their first church in 1872. The congregation at Reidsville was organized also in 1872. By 1872, Lewis' last year on the circuit, the Wentworth Circuit was composed of the

following churches: Wentworth; Salem, soon to be closed as a preaching point with the formation of the Methodist church in nearby Reidsville; Ruffin, Mount Carmel, Bethlehem, Lowe's, Penile, Pelham (in Caswell County) and the Union Meetinghouse in the northeastern part of the county which united Baptists, Primitive Baptists, Presbyterians and Methodists "under one roof."

William Caphus Norman (1847-1902) was sent to the Wentworth Circuit for the year 1873. Norman was the son of Alfred Norman who pastored the circuit from 1858-60. The Ruffin congregation had become so strong in the 1870s that the parsonage was moved from Wentworth to Ruffin. Nevertheless Norman, as was his father, was a great revivalist and many members were added to the circuit roll. It was during Norman's pastorate that Rev. Numa F. Reid died at Wentworth in June 1873 and was buried in the Methodist Cemetery following the largest attended funeral in the church's history.

Rev. Van Buren Albright Sharpe (1834-1894) was called to pastor the Wentworth Circuit for the year 1877. By January 1877, Sharpe had settled in Ruffin and at once set to work on the Wentworth Circuit. During the Sharpe pastorate which lasted through 1880, the first Methodist church in Reidsville was dedicated in 1878, the cornerstone of the new Lowe's Church was laid in 1880, the new church at Mt. Carmel was completed in September 1879, and in 1880 the 1835 Bethlehem Church was renovated at a total cost of \$200.00. Rev. Sharpe was assisted by Rev. W.S. Hales during 1880 and by the Rev. John Anderson, a local pastor, throughout his pastorate."



Rev. VanBuren A. Sharpe (1834-1894), Minister of the Wentworth Circuit 1877-1881. Photograph courtesy of Rev. Bruce Pate.

By 1880 it seemed obvious that the Wentworth Church was in need of renovation. Few if any changes had been made to the building in the last twenty years. In March 1880 the following handbill was issued;

Special Tobacco Sale!!

Do Not Forget The Week and Days

The Piedmont Warehouse of Reidsville, N.C., conducted by a reliable and popular firm has kindly consented to give the Cemetery and Methodist Church in Wentworth, N.C. a liberal benefit from their tobacco sales during the first week of May 1880, comprising the 3rd, 4th, 5th, 6th, 7th, and 8th days of May 1880.

We appeal to our friends and fellow citizens of Rockingham to aid us by sending their tobacco to the Piedmont Warehouse at this time. The highest market prices will be obtained and a good cause assisted. You will receive the best attention and accommodation and every facility will be afforded to make your tobacco bring the highest possible market price. Remember the days.

Jas. W. Reid J.T. Wall W.T. Williams J.D. Ellington and others March 20, 1880⁷⁹

Clearly the Wentworth Church had hoped to raise funds to improve the cemetery and sanctuary. According to residents who were living in Wentworth at the time and members of the Wright-Reid family, James W. Reid (1849-1902), the son of Rev. Numa F. Reid, was the motivating force in the renovation project. The total extent of Reid's role in the project is not completely clear although his position in the church (trustee) and community would amply qualify him for much service. No records have survived in reference to the renovation but it was probably in 1881.

Only fragmentary evidence suggest what work was accomplished during the project. The heavy paneled square support post almost in front of the pulpit was removed. Oddly enough no problems resulted from its removal other than a slight settling of the ceiling overhead. The simple chancel was apparently replaced with a rectangular platform projecting from the rear (south) wall, surrounded by a semicircular chancel rail of turned balasters. The front pew of the long center row was removed. This change was made to accomodate the larger chancel area. The east half of the second pew was removed and replaced by a small pump organ and a short pew erected by

James Reid for his two daughters, Annie and Lucile. It was probably at this time that stoves were installed within the east and west rows of pews. The stovepipes from the two stoves joined together over the center row and passed through a "swinging chimney" erected in the attic. The rectangular end panels of the pews and the front doors were grained in a manner similar to the woodwork at the Reid Hotel, then owned by James Reid. Around this time kerosene lights were installed, which could be lowered with a chain to be lighted, and also bracket light fixtures mounted to the window facings. Carpet in the aisles and around the chancel seems to have been placed during this time and the remainder of the floor painted. It is possible that the present tin roof was added at this time.

The only other reference to the renovation at Wentworth appears in the following announcement in the October 5, 1881 edition of the Raleigh Christian Advocate...

A layman writes: "Through the efforts of Mr. W.W. Ellington of the firm of Thaxton and Ellington, his own firm and those of Messrs. G.A. Delorne, Geo. Gibson, Jr., Weisingner & Co.; Wingo, Elliott & Crump; Watkins, Cottrell & Co., Milniser & Co., C.W. Thorn & Co., Baughman Bros., Heitman & Younger, Randolph & English and Gresham & Brown of Richmond, Va., have contributed liberally to the aid of the Methodist Church at Wentworth. They are all reliable firms and deserve the handsome patronage they receive from our state. We hope our people show a practical appreciation of their generosity to one of our churches.⁸²

The renovation of 1881 was the last major change in the appearance of the church for the next seventy years.

Rev. Peter L. Herman (1833-1899) was the last minister appointed to the Wentworth Circuit. In his 1894 essay "Reidsville Methodism" John G. Staples wrote the following about Herman's year on the circuit.

Rev. P.L. Herman was our pastor (in 1881) . . . He reached us (Reidsville) in the midst of a severe snowstorm and though his previous and subsequent labors have been signally blessed, this blizzard in which he arrived seemed to have had a chilling effect upon his spirits and so he did not make any very marked progress during the year.⁸³

By 1881 the Reidsville congregation had become so large that they demanded more pastoral attention of one who had some eight or nine churches to pastor. Consequently at the 1881 Annual Conference, the Wentworth Circuit was abolished, being replaced with two smaller circuits; The Reidsville Circuit, composed of Wentworth, Reidsville, Lowe's and Penile Churches, and the Ruffin Circuit, composed of Bethlehem, Ruffin, Pelham and Mt. Carmel Churches. It was to the Reidsville Circuit that Rev. John Edwin Thompson (1853-1943) was appointed for 1882 and 1883. Rev. Thompson and his wife resided in the new parsonage at Reidsville.

All during the pastorate of Rev. Alex R. Raven, who was appointed for 1884, the Reidsville congregation continued to advocate making the Reidsville Church a self sustaining station. Conference would have to resolve the situation soon.⁸⁶

Meanwhile the Wentworth Church needed to expand the cemetery. On October 25, 1883 the church trustees purchased from Richard A. Ellington and A.J. Whittemore a lot adjacent to the west side of the church property consisting of 70 poles of land. The trustees in 1883 were James D. Ellington, Richard Thomas Perryman Jones, Richard A. Ellington (1818-1884) James W. Reid (1849-1902), William T. Williams (1839-1919), a local farmer and county Republican leader who moved his membership to Wentworth when the Salem Church closed around 1873, William M. Harrison (1827-1913), and James T. Wall (ca 1820-after 1883). It is believed that the trustees also purchased a lot on the east side of the church lot at about this time. Both of these purchases along with the 1859 lot make up the present church lot.*

The earliest known records of the Wentworth Church date from 1884 with the Sunday School roll book. It is not known when the Sunday School at Wentworth was organized, but as early as 1851, classes existed on the Wentworth Circuit. Bethlehem Church's Sunday School was organized in 1880, according to tradition, though it may have dated from an earlier period. In the early days, Sunday School was held from April to December with no classes held during the winter months.⁸⁸

The first roll of the school members dates from 1884 and was divided according to the individual classes. It is as follows;

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Class I
A.J. Whittmore, Teacher
Scholars
Jas. M. Rosser
Jas. B. Crafton
Chas. E. Mitchell
Jas. R. Shreves
R.G. Mitchell
Robert Hancock

Class III
Mrs. Jas. W. Reid, Teacher
Scholars
Ida Abbott
Mattie D. Crafton
Willie H. Hancock
John Meeks
Sam'l Alcorn
Mattie Ellington
Jas. L. Price
George Coleman
W.S. Ellington

Class.VI
Miss Josie Abbot, Teacher
Scholars
Cora Mobley
Maggie Mitchell
Fannie Mitchell
Fannie L. Morphis
Alice Morphis
John D. Carter
June Mitchell
Alice Mobley
Wallie Scott
Ada Scott
Martha Diamond
Numa Mitchell

Class II
Numa F. Hancock, Teacher
Scholars
James M. Harrison
Numa R. Reid
Jas. H. Hazlip
Chas. Mobley
Leroy Tomlinson
Willis Booker

Class IV Miss Mary Reid, Teacher Scholars Annie D. Reid Eva Wall Maggie Hancock Sallie Hancock

Class V Mrs. A.W. Johnston, Teacher Scholars Mandy Ellington Judy Ellington Lucy Reid Pattie Mitchell Sue Kate Mobley

While the records are unclear, it appears that the Wentworth Methodists and Presbyterians (organized in 1859) combined Sunday School classes in 1888 as the rolls for that year list several members of the Presbyterian Church. The same congregation worshipped in both churches; the Methodist church having services on the first and third Sundays, the Presbyterian Church with services on the second and fourth Sundays."

In December 1884 Rev. David R. Bruton returned to Rockingham County with his apointment to the Reidsville Circuit. Bruton arrived in Reidsville on December 15 and preached his first sermon at Wentworth on the morning of December 21, 1884. The Reidsville Methodists finally achieved their long sought goal for in late 1885 the Annual Conference abolished the Reidsville Circuit. The Reidsville Church (later known as Main Street Church when moved to the present location in 1892) became a station church while Lowe's and Penile Churches were placed on the Ruffin Circuit and the Wentworth Church was placed on the Madison Circuit.

The Madison Circuit was pastored by Rev. Robert Preston Troy (1838-1899) who was appointed to the circuit in 1883. No doubt the Wentworth congregation was unhappy being on such a dispersed circuit for in December 1887 the Wentworth Church was placed on the Ruffin Circuit now composed of; Ruffin, Mt. Carmel, Lowe's, Bethelhem, Pelham, Penile and Wentworth. Fortunately Rev. Troy was transferred to the Ruffin Circuit and he was able to continue the good work he had initiated at Wentworth. In the month of April 1886 alone Troy added 24 names to the roll at Wentworth. In late December 1887 Rev. Troy issued this preaching schedule for the Ruffin Circuit beginning the following month.

1st Sunday - 11 am at Mt. Carmel

6½ pm at Wentworth

2nd Sunday - 11 am at Bethelehem

3rd Sunday - 11 am at Lowes'

4th Sunday - 11 am at Pelham

6½ pm at Ruffin

5th Sunday - 11:30 am at Penile84

With seven churches on the Ruffin Circuit it seemed impossible for a church to have more than one service a month with one pastor. Likely local pastors assisted whenever needed. Rev. Troy first settled in Reidsville later moving to Ruffin in December 1888.⁹⁵

The first membership roll of the Wentworth Church dates from 1888 with some ninety members, nearly half of whom were added after 1886. Among the prominent family names in the church were; Hancock, Mitchell, Williams, Gunn, Ellington, Jones, Reid, Whittemore and Wright.

For three years the overburdened Ruffin Circuit continued to operate under Rev. Troy. In 1890 the Western North Carolina Conference was formed including the counties south and west of Rockingham County. The counties to the east and southeast remained in the North Carolina Conference. Also in 1890 the size of the Ruffin Circuit was reduced to at least five churches; Ruffin, Lowes', Penile, Pelham, and Mt. Carmel, (in 1891 Salem Church was added to the Ruffin Circuit), and the Leaksville Circuit was formed incorporating the Leaksville, Bethlehem and Wentworth Churches. Tev. Joseph Carson Thomas (1828-1906) was appointed to the Leaksville Circuit for 1891.

Apparently the changes made in 1890 were unsatisfactory for at the 1891 Annual Conference the Leaksville Circuit was dissolved and the Wentworth Circuit was formed including Wentworth; Bethlehem; and Hickory Grove, a preaching point by early 1892 in northeastern Rockingham County. In 1892 Mt. Carmel was added to the Wentworth Circuit and the following year, 1893, saw Salem Church brought over from the Ruffin Circuit in exchange for Hickory Grove. 94 No further changes were made in the Wentworth Circuit until 1914. The pastor appointed to the new Wentworth Circuit was William Fletcher Womble (1859-1929) on his first charge as a Methodist minister. 104 Rev. and Mrs. Womble and their young son Bunyan moved into a home on East Main Street in Wentworth, which later was known as the Dr. Samuel Ellington residence. 104

Few pastors had before or have since left their mark upon the Wentworth Church in the same manner as did Rev. Womble. So highly admired and loved was this man of God that many children born within the circuit were named after him. Mrs. Womble and son joined the Wentworth Church but accompanied Rev. Womble to his other appointments. During his four years there, the pastor's salary was increased from \$200.00 in 1892 to \$478.00 in 1895, and the circuit membership increased from 223 in 1892 to 535 in 1895. When Rev. Womble left the circuit in 1895, the Wentworth Church was at one of its strongest periods. 102

John McCollum Price (1863-1924), a Rockingham County native, succeeded Rev. Womble in late 1895. 103 Likely Rev. Price resided in Wentworth during his pastorate. Upon his reappointment in 1897 a Reidsville newspaper reported, "The return of Rev. J.M. Price to the Wentworth Circuit is very gatifying to his friends in Reidsville. He is a safe and sound preacher and a most excellent young man and the work on his charge is progressing." 104

Edward Jasper Poe (1864-1935) came to replace Rev. Price in 1899. A local newspaper reporting the Wentworth news stated, "Our new preacher, Rev. Mr. Poe, is unable to secure a house in Wentworth as every dwelling is

Wentworth Methodist Church the education building. The Rev. Claris Isley (insert) was the motivator of the building project. Photograph courtesy



Rev. William F. Womble (1859-1929).



occupied at present."¹⁰⁵ The problem of a pastor finding appropriate lodgings had been a recurring one for Methodist ministers in the county. It was at this time (1899-1900) that talk of locating a parsonage for the circuit reached a peak and it might have seemed appropriate to locate one in Wentworth. But the site of the parsonage was to be in Reidsville, which may have been selected because it was a more impartial location. On January 1, 1901 for two hundred dollars, William and Eugenia Lindsey odd to the trustees of the Wentworth Circuit a lot containing some 22,050 square feet on Matlock (now North Scales) Street in Reidsville. ¹⁰⁶ Soon a plain two story frame house was erected which continued to be used as a parsonage until about 1960. Rev. W. Legette, who came to the Wentworth Circuit in December 1900, was probably the first pastor to occupy the new parsonage. ¹⁰⁵ The removal of the parsonage to Reidsville in 1901 was the first of many blows the Wentworth Church would suffer. Never again would the church be as strong as it had been.

Although it had lost influence within the circuit in the early 1900s, Wentworth strived to remain an active congregation. The Methodist and Presbyterian Churches still continued their alternate Sunday worship services. The Methodist Sunday School classes were held in various parts of the sanctuary under the leadership of Messers James T. Smith, A.J. Whittemore, Numa R. Reid and Mesdames Reid and Charles McMichael 108 The Sunday School Superintendents at Wentworth during the 1920s were James T. Smith, Mrs. Numa Reid, L.A. Julian and Alvin E. Gunn. 109 In the early years especially on rural charges, Sunday School disbanded for the winter months. Miss Frances Ellington Reid, a great-granddaughter of Rev. Numa F. Reid, served as Sunday School organist. Miss Mary Ann Reid, a daughter of Rev. Reid, and later Mrs. Tula McMichael, the wife of a local attorney, served as organists for the worship services during the first couple of decades of the 1900s. 100 Special services at the Wentworth Church centered around the typical ones held in similar churches. "Children's Day" programs were popular with both the adults and children. Protracted meetings "to convert us all" were held mostly at night, although some were held during the daytime necessitating the early dismissal of the Wentworth School students so that they could "help fill up the seats" in the church. There were also "... special Sundays when we spread our lunches under the trees in front of the church or had sumptuous picnics."111 Christmas was usually observed with a special program complete with a decorated cedar tree set up near the chancel.

It was during the first four decades of the present century that one person from the Wentworth congregation stood out. That person was Numa Raine Reid (1873-1946) the son of Rev. Numa F. Reid and a member of one of

North Carolina's most noted Methodist families. A posthumous child whose mother died when he was only eleven, young Reid was raised by his mother's sisters, the Wrights, who operated the local hotel in Wentworth. Although a graduate of Trinity College, Reid shunned a professional career and remained in Wentworth where he assisted in the operation of the family hotel and served as the town's postmaster for many years. Reid was active in local and state Republican affairs most of his adult life. 112

Reid continued the family's Methodist tradition with an active membership at the Wentworth Church. For years he served as class teacher, membership secretary, trustee, and lay speaker. Numa Reid was likely the county's greatest orator of this century with the possible exception of Judge Henry Lane. On numerous occassions, Reid was called to give dedication speeches, commencements addresses and sermons when the pastor was ill or away. There was "...much wit in his oratory, and a good sense of humor. Once when making a speech in the (Wentworth) Methodist Church, he said his best page blew out the window." Mr. Reid's tenor voice was admired and remembered by many. [13]

The Rev. Thomas C. Jordan came to the Wentworth Circuit in late 1914. At the 1914 Annual Conference, Mt. Carmel Church was placed on the Ruffin Circuit being replaced on the Wentworth Circuit by Lowes' Church. The Mt. Carmel congregation was displeased with the change and in 1915 was placed back on the Wentworth Circuit with Lowes' Church retained. Five churches on a circuit were too great a load and attempts in juggling the preaching schedule were unsuccessful. In 1917 Mt. Carmel was placed on the Draper Circuit where it remained until 1923 when it returned to the Wentworth Circuit.

Rev. Jordan was one of few pastors". . . who took it upon himself to convert Wentworth." His efforts apparently paid off for on March 28, 1915 eighteen, mostly young people, united with the Wentworth Church. Most of these people were baptised although a few joined by vows: James J. Scott, Henry B. Scott (son of James), Morris McMichael, Charles O. McMichael Jr., Mrs. Tula Busick McMichael (mother of Morris and Charles, Jr.), William ("Willie") Hicks, Charles Julian, Vivian E. Julian (sister of Charles), Rebekah and Sally Smith (sisters), William Stafford Hancock and Margaret Woodley Hancock (cousins), Frances, Lucile and Henrietta Reid (sisters) and their mother Mrs. Reuben Reid, and Miss Sue Lee Carter.

The first surviving list of stewards and trustees for the Wentworth Circuit dates from December 1921. Circuit Stewards from Wentworth were Mr. and Mrs. Numa Reid, Charlie A. Gunn and Prof. L.N. Hickerson, county school superintendent. Trustees from Wentworth were Numa Reid, Prof.

Hickerson, Charlie A. Gunn, James J. Scott and Walter M. Gunn. In December 1921 the circuit membership was 473 with the four churches; Wentworth, Salem, Lowes' and Bethlehem.¹¹⁶

It is in 1921 that the first mention is found of a Ladies Aid Society existing at Wentworth. Nevertheless the ladies were already an active group, as they had previously purchased Victorian pulpit chairs from the First Baptist Church in Reidsville. By the mid 1920s the Ladies' Society at Wentworth had ceased to exist formally. By February 1928 a Senior Epworth League was organized at Wentworth with Prof. M.S. Rose as its president. It disbanded within the year.

Several ministers had since served the Wentworth Circuit; Franklin L. Townsend (1916-1919), Charles F. Sherrill (1919-1921), Charles P. Goode (1921-1925), John Thomas Ratledge (1925-1928) and W. Reid Harris (1928-1930). Very little is known about these pastors and their influence upon the Wentworth Church, although by now the congregation was dwindling due to the exodus of young people to larger towns and cities. During the pastorate of Rev. Harris (1928-1930) the following was the monthly preaching schedule:

Salem 3 pm
2nd Sunday - Bethlehem 11 am
Carmel 3 pm
3rd Sunday - Lowes' 11 am
Salem 3 pm
4th Sunday - Carmel 11 am

1st Sunday - Wentworth 11 am

Bethlehem 3 pm Wentworth 7:30 pm

5th Sunday - Salem 11 am¹¹⁹

Thomas V. Crouse (1875-1966) was appointed to the Wentworth Circuit in 1930. A farmer's son from Surry County, N.C., Crouse was a popular minister in the Western Conference. Rev. Crouse's autobiography gives account of his experiences on the Wentworth Circuit, which in 1932 was renamed the Reidsville Circuit much to the displeasement of the Wentworth Church. 120

On reaching the Reidsville Circuit I found plenty of hard work to do. That is always true, especially on country charges. I had five churches to serve. The churches and parsonage were all badly in need of repair. I spent twelve hundred dollars on the parsonage. Paid a debt for street work in front of the parsonage to the amount of five or six hundred dollars, that had been standing for five years. I built Sunday School rooms to the three largest churches (Lowes, Mt. Carmel, and Bethlehem), and made repairs on the others (Wentworth and Salem). During the eleven years on the charge, I added to the church roll about five hundred members. I feel like I did my best work on this charge. I did many things in the eleven years that could not have been done in three or four years. . . I left Reidsville Circuit in good condition, and it is still going good. ¹²¹

Despite Rev. Crouse's bright note upon leaving the circuit in 1941, the Wentworth Church's death knell had already been sounded. During the 1930s the congregation was struggling to remain active. In late 1934 the Wentworth and Salem Sunday Schools closed for the winter with plans to open again in the spring of 1935. Instead the Wentworth classes were disbanded and many went to the Wentworth Presbyterian Church for classes. With the collapse of the Sunday School, and the exodus of young people from Wentworth the future seemed bleak. 122

Shortly after the arrival of Rev. Byron Shankle in late 1941, there arose a movement to close the Wentworth Church. Mrs. Numa Reid, the wife of the leading Methodist in Wentworth, organized this movement. Rumors about the structural stability of the church were circulated throughout the area. ¹²³

The efforts to close the church were successful due to the weakened condition of the Wentworth congregation. Consequently, during the pastorates of Rev. Shankle and John C. Swaim, who came in 1943, the Methodists worshipped at the Presbyterian Church. The Methodist ministers preached in the Presbyterian Church, where the services took on a less denominational air, as the Presbyterians were also on a charge and had to share their pastors. The Methodist Church was closed for all intents and purposes with the exception of funerals and similar services. 124

By 1945 Rev. Swaim had come to the conclusion that the Methodists in Wentworth needed to be back in their own building. Rev. Swaim went as far as to crawl up under the church to inspect the building's structural condition. His conclusion was that the church was as solid as ever. The pastor encouraged area residents to join the Methodist Church along with the loyal few that had remained members. More frequent services were held in the church, but it was not until the pastorate of Rev. Claris G. Isley (1949-1953) that regular services were held at Wentworth. Among those who were active in the reopening of the Wentworth Church were; Mr. Robert Gunn, Mrs. Margaret H. Kerley, Mr. & Mrs. D.Y. Adams, Mr. & Mrs. E.E. Boyd,

Mr. & Mrs. C.A. Gunn, Mr. & Mrs. A.E. Gunn, Mr. Frank Mitchell and Mr. Robert Mitchell.

Rev. Isley continued the excellent progress begun by Rev. Swaim. With the aid of his devoted Christian mother, Mrs. Hattie B. Isley, This pastor threw himself into strengthening all of the churches on the Reidsville Circuit. Under his leadership, youth groups existed in all five churches. The Isleys realized that any potential growth at Wentworth would be minimal without an organized Sunday School. On Sunday March 18, 1951 the Wentworth Methodist Sunday School was reorganized with classes being held in the sanctuary. 126

Soon after the church reopened, the sanctuary was renovated. A coal furnace to provide the heat for the sanctuary replaced the two wood stoves. The interior woodwork was covered with orange shellac, the sanctuary's pine floor was painted with a yellow base coat and carpet was installed. Simple and austere electric fixtures replaced the quaint Victorian lights. The pew partition was removed as to make accessibility easier. The pump organ had been replaced with a piano years before. 12.

With the Sunday School classes progressing, it became evident that classrooms would be necessary. Under Rev. Isley's leadership, plans for an educational wing to the rear of the existing sanctuary were drawn up and approved. Mr. Samuel F. Scott served as chairman of the building committee and Mrs. Charlie A. Gunn served as treasurer for the project. Initial funds were raised and construction began in January 1953, with Mr. John E. Carter the contractor. The wing which was completed in June 1953 was first used in May of that year. The addition was a plain two story, annex consisting of six classrooms and a social hall in the basement. The three upstairs classrooms on the top floor were neither painted nor furnished as it was Rev. Isley's belief that they would be put in order as the number of classes increased. The total cost of the project was \$7,215.31 and the indebtedness on the building was paid off in January 1955. Page 1985.

Rev. Isley was also credited with the construction of the new sanctuaries at Mt. Carmel and Lowes' Churches and the educational wing at Salem Church. Likely Rev. Isley's most effective work was done on the Reidsville Circuit. His dedication overtaxed his health and he died five months after leaving the Reidsville Circuit while en route to Rockingham County from Greensboro in order to visit some of his former parishioners.¹²⁰

Rev. Joseph W. Lasley came to the Reidsville Circuit in September 1953 and continued the progress initiated by Rev. Isley. On July 3, 1955 the educational wing was dedicated at Wentworth at a 9:15 am service conducted by Rev. Lasley, the Rev. Herman Duncan, the Superintendent of the Greensboro District and Bishop Costen Harrell of the Western North

Carolina Conference. The new sanctuaries at Lowes' and Mt. Carmel were dedicated on the same day also. The size of the Reidsville Circuit was reduced with the Mt. Carmel Church becoming a station in September 1956.

In 1956 Rev. James G. Allred came to the circuit and was the last pastor whose family lived the entire pastorate in the old parsonage on North Scales Street in Reidsville. In 1959 Rev. John Kincaid came to pastor the charge and he lived much of his pastorate in the new parsonage at Lowes' Church which was preparing to become a station church, which it did in 1963. The old parsonage was sold and soon torn down. In 1963 a lot for a new parsonage near Salem Church was purchased and a brick residence was erected.

In February 1961 the board of the Wentworth Church voted to complete the basement under the classrooms for use as a fellowship hall. Funds were allocated from the Wentworth Church's share of the proceeds from the sale of the old parsonage, and the funds of the Methodist Women's Society of Christian Service Treasury and other sources. The work began during the year and was completed in 1962. [18]

Nine pastors have followed since the last change in the Reidsville Circuit in 1963; Edmund Lynn, Lowell Swisher, Charles Adams, Edward Moore, William Harris, Guy Godfrey, James McArn, Parker H. Hager and N. Ashley Randal, Jr. 181 Despite all efforts, the Wentworth Church since the 1960s has experienced a steady decline in membership. At present (1986) only one Sunday School class, the Senior Class, remains active. During the year 1972 the Methodist Youth and Woman's Society were reorganized, however the youth group disbanded in late 1972. The Woman's Society, despite excellent leaders, lost membership and disbanded in the late 1970s. The Wentworth Church has 9:00 am Sunday services.

In the late 1970s it became evident to the Wentworth Congregation that improvements and repairs to the sanctuary and educational wing were badly needed. Despite an absence of funds a restoration committee was formed in 1981 under the leadership of Michael Perdue, church historian, and Mrs. Lawrence Gunn, church treasurer. The congregation established goals and in April 1981 the process of improvements to the church began. Basically the goals of the restoration - renovation project are returning the church sanctuary to a more Victorian appearance, while renovating the educational wing and fellowship hall to better accommodate the needs of the congregation. The work has included painting, refinishing, weatherizing, safety improvements, considerable carpentry work as well as plans to purchase a new piano and organ for the sanctuary. It was hoped that the project would be completed in time for the church's sesquicentenial in October 1986, but inadequate funds will prevent the goal from being

reached. Nevertheless the congregation is determined to see the church return to its former glory someday in the future. With the devoted attention of the Rev. Howard Allred, District Superintendent of the Northeast District (of which the Reidsville Circuit is a part), the project's progress has been better than first envisioned. 136

What is the future of the Wentworth Church? With a congregation of the average age of 63 years, an average attendance of about 14 for Sunday services out of a total membership of 39, and no member younger than twenty years old, it appears that it is only a matter of time before the Wentworth Church will face extinction. Whatever the future holds, may the untold good that this church has done live in each one who has been associated with it. If that is possible then the efforts of a few faithful Christians, who on one Saturday morning in October 1836 established the Wentworth Methodist Episcopal Church, will not have been in vain.

The writer would like to express his thanks to the following people who provided information and other assistance in the preparation of this account:

Miss Frances R. Brown
Mr. Robert W. Carter, Jr.
Dr. Larry E. Tise
Miss Nancy L. Withers
Mr. William F. Womble
Mrs. Margaret Kerley
Ms. Emma M. Adams
Mrs. Elmer Boyd
Rev. Joseph W. Lasley
Dr. C. Franklin Grill
Dr. J. Elwood Carroll

Mr. William C. Stokes
Dr. Bernard Russell
Mr. Edward Fitch
Mrs. Lucile R. Fagg
Mrs. Frances R. Walton
Mrs. Gordon Siler
Mrs. Ellen Pepper Tilley
Rev. Bruce Pate
Mrs. Fred Mitchell
Mrs. Margaret Perdue
Rev. George W. Bumgarner

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Notes

¹Larry E. Tise, A House Not Made With Hands: Love's Methodist church 1791-1966, (Piedmont Press, 1966), p.vii.

²Tise, Love's Methodist Church, p. 10.

 3 William Lee Grissom, History of Methodism in North Carolina from 1772 to the present time. (Nashville, 1905), pp. 48, 64.

⁴Tise, Love's Methodist Church, p. 7.

⁵Grissom, History of Methodism, pp. 63, 94, 126.

⁶"List of pastors for the Guilford Circuit 1783-1836", compiled by Mr. Edward Fitch of Randolph-Macon College, Ashland Virginia, for Michael Perdue, March 1985. The list was compiled from conference records kept in the Methodist Room of that college.

7"List of pastors for the Guilford Circuit 1783-1836", this list also notes the changes in the

conference and districts that included Rockingham County.

⁸James Elwood Carroll, Lucy M. Rankin and Robert W. Carter, Jr. "United Methodist Churches" in *The Heritage of Rockingham County North Carolina 1983*, (Rockingham County Historical Society, in cooperation with Hunter Publishing Company, Winston-Salem, N.C. 1983), pp 103-104. Hereinafter cited as "Carroll, *United Methodist Churches.*"

Carroll, "United Methodist Churches", pp. 104-105.

10 Carroll, "United Methodist Churches", p. 104,

¹¹Rockingham County Court Minutes, August 1815, May 1820.

¹²Reidsville Review, September 27, 1895.

¹²Reidsville Review, September 27, 1895.

¹³Guilford Circuit Quarterly Conference Book 1832-1865, Manuscript Department of the William R. Perkins Library, Duke University. Minutes of April 6, 1833 meeting. Hereinafter cited as "Guilford Circuit Book".

¹⁴Guilford Circuit Book, Minutes of November 22, 1834 meeting.

¹⁵Guilford Circuit Book, Minutes of May 30, 1835 meeting.

¹⁶Guilford Circuit Book, Minutes of July 9, 1836 & September 15, 1836 meetings. It must be noted that Rockingham County was taken out of the Guilford Circuit in January 1837.

¹⁷Rockingham County Deed Book, 2dI, p. 314, Register of Deeds Office, Wentworth, N.C.

¹⁸Carroll, "United Methodist Churches", p. 105 and Raleigh Christian Advocate, September 27, 1871.

¹⁹Rockingham County Deed Book, 2dA, p. 225.

²⁰Rockingham County Marriage Bond Book, Register of Deeds Office, Wentworth, N.C.
²¹Clyde C. Taylor, A History of the Holderby Family, typescript, Silver Springs, Maryland;

1972, p.5.

²²Rockingham County Deed Book, 2dF, p. 424; Rockingham County Marriage Bond Book.

²³Raleigh Christian Advocate, April 24, 1878.

²⁴ The Journal of Rockingham County History and Genealogy, Volume X, Number 2. December 1985, pp. 67-68.

²⁵"List of pastors for the Guilford Circuit 1783-1836".

²⁶Letter, dated February 20, 1986, from Dr. C. Franklin Grill, North Carolina Conference Historian to Michael Perdue.

27. List of pastors, statistics and circuit changes involving the Wentworth M.E. Church South 1836-1940" prepared by Michael Perdue 1985 for the Wentworth Church. Information was compiled basically from conference minutes and local church records (unpublished). Hereinafter cited as "Pastors, Statistics and Circuits".

²⁸"Pastors, Statistics and Circuits"; Notebook of Rev. William W. Albea, Manuscript

Department, Perkins Library, Duke University.

²⁹The Journal of Rockingham County History and Genealogy Volume V, Number 1, June 1980, p. 14.

- 30. Pastors, Statistics and Circuits."
- ¹¹James W. Reid and Frank L. Reid, *Life Sermons and Speeches of Rev. Numa F. Reid, D.D. Late of North Carolina Conference.* (New York, E.J. Hale & Son, Publishers', 1874), p.30. Rev. John W. Lewis, Rev. Reid's uncle, wrote the biographical sketch. Hereinafter cited as *Reid's Sermons*.
 - 32"Pastors, Statistics and Circuits."
 - 33. Pastors, Statistics and Circuits."
 - ¹⁴Reid's Sermons, pp. 37-39.
 - 15 Reid's Sermons, pp. 31-32.
 - *Reid's Sermons, pp. 32-34.
- The schoolhouse remained in use in Wentworth until 1909. Local tradition and Rockingham County Deed Book, 2dY, p. 589.
 - "Reid's Sermons, pp. 39-41.
 - ¹⁹Reid family tradition.
 - "Reid's Sermons, p. 41.
 - 11 Raleigh Christian Advocate June 2, 1875 and "Pastors, Statistics and Circuits,"
 - ¹²Tise, Love's Methodist Church, p. 27, "Pastors, Statistics and Circuits."
 - ¹ Membership register for the Wentworth church 1888-1954.
 - 11 Rockingham County Deed Book, 2 dV. p. 368.
 - Rockingham County Deed Book, 2dV, p. 531.
 - 46 Rockingham County Deed Book, 2dV. p. 560.
 - ⁴⁷Rockingham County Deed Book, 2dV, p. 151.
 - ⁴⁸Rockingham County Deed Bood, 2dV, p. 589.
- ¹⁹Gravestone inscription of A. Summerfield Norman, son of Rev. Alfred Norman in the Ellington Family Cemetery one mile west of Wentworth.
 - "Local tradition.
 - ⁵¹Rockingham County Marriage Bond Book.
 - ⁵²Rockingham County Journal of History and Genealogy. December 1985, p.70.
- $^{53}\mathrm{Conversation}$ with Mrs. Gordon Siler of Eden, N.C. May 1979, Mrs. Siler is a granddaughter of Patterson.
- ¹⁴Letter dated January 2, 1986 from Rev. J. Elwood Carroll to Michael Perdue. Rev. Carroll is a grandson of R.P. Jones.
 - Rockingham County Deed Book, 2dT, p. 557 and 2dP, p. 335.
 - ⁵⁶1850census, Rockingham County, Eastern Division.
 - ¹⁷Conversation with Mrs. Gordon Siler, May 1979.
 - ⁵⁸Raleigh Christian Advocate. September, 1859.
 - "Raleigh Christian Advocate, November, 1859.
 - ⁶⁰Raleigh Christian Advocate, November, 1859.
- ⁶⁰Leaksville built a new frame church in 1903, since replaced by a new brick edifice. Raleigh Christian Advocate. November, 1859.
 - ⁶¹No major changes in the 1859 building appear to have been made before the 1880s.
 - ⁶²Gravestone inscriptions in the cemetery as of 1985.
- ⁶³Conversation with Mr. William C. Stokes of Reidsville, N.C., August 1985. Mr. Stokes is a grandson of Rev. Norman. Local tradition.
 - 61"Pastors, Statistics and Circuits."
 - 65 1860 Census, Eastern Division of Rockingham County.
 - ⁶⁶Raleigh Christian Advocate, January 20, 1860.
 - "Raleigh Christian Advocate. September 25, 1860.
 - ⁶⁸Letter dated February 20, 1986 from Dr. C. Franklin Grill, to Michael Perdue.
- ⁶⁹Letter dated January 15, 1986 from Mrs. Ellen Pepper Tilley to Michael Perdue. Mrs. Tilley is a relative of Rev. Pepper.

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⁷⁰Letter dated November 5, 1863 from Rev. Clarendon M. Pepper to his father. In posession of Mrs. Ellen Tilley, Danbury, N.C.

⁷¹Gravestone inscriptions in Boyd-Reid Plot in the church cemetery. See also *Reid's Sermons* pp. 218, 325. Local tradition.

72"Pastors, Statistics and Circuits."

⁷³Raleigh Christian Advocate, August 19, 1868.

⁷⁴Webster's Weekly, June 21, 1894.

Table Local tradition, "Pastors, Statistics and Circuits."

⁷⁶Raleigh Christian Advocate, June 13, 1873.

77"Pastors, Statistics and Circuits."

⁷⁸Raleigh Christian Advocate, December 25, 1878; October 1, 1879; November 10, 1880.

⁷⁹Handbill in possession of Mrs. Gordon Siler of Eden, N.C.

⁸⁰Tradition of the Reid family. Conversation with Mrs. Lucile Fagg of Eden, N.C. February 1986. Mrs. Fagg is a granddaughter of James W. Reid.

⁵¹The short pew used by the Reid sisters vanished during the renovation of the church circa 1950.

82 Raleigh Christian Advocate. October 5, 1881.

Webster's Weekly. June 21, 1894.

**Webster's Weekly. June 21, 1894. Membership register of the Wentworth Church 1888-1954.

Webster's Weekly, June 21, 1894.

"Reidsville Times. September 1884 and "Pastors, Statistics and Circuits".

*Rockingham County Deed Book, 3dV, p. 141.

88 Sunday School roll book for the Wentworth Church, 1884-1888.

Ibid.

90 Webster's Weekly. December 16, 1884.

⁹¹Membership register of the Wentworth Church 1888-1954. Webster's Weekly, June 21, 1894.

92"Pastors, Statistics, and Circuits".

^{9.1}Membership register, 1888-1954.

"Reidsville Times. December 23, 1887.

⁹⁵Reidsville Times. December 9, 1887 and December 7, 1888.

⁹⁶Membership register, 1888-1954.

⁹⁷Membership register, "Pastors, Statistics and Circuits".

⁹⁸Membership register, 1888-1954.

⁹⁹ Pastors, Statistics and Circuits", Raleigh Christian Advocate June 1, 1892 and September 20, 1893.

Mrs. Mary Raine Craddock (deceased) interviewed by Miss Nancy Withers circa 1970.
Mrs. Craddock lived most of her ninety-four years across the street from the Womble residence.

Membership register 1888-1954 also "Pastors, Statistics and Circuits."

102" Pastors, Statistics and Circuits", and local tradition.

103"Pastors, Statistics and Circuits."

104 Webster's Weekly. December 9, 1897.

105 Webster's Weekly, December 21, 1899.

¹⁰⁶Rockingham County, Deed Book 132, p. 124.

107 Membership register, 1888-1954.

108 Letter dated February 1986 from Mrs. Frances R. Walton to Michael Perdue. Mrs. Walton is a sister of Mrs. Lucile Fagg.

109"Pastors, Statistics and Circuits."

¹¹⁰Conversation with Mrs. Margaret Hancock Kerley, December 1985. Mrs. Kerley has been a member of the Wentworth Church since 1915.

¹¹¹Letter dated February, 1986 from Mrs. Frances Walton to Michael Perdue.

¹¹²Michael Perdue, "Numa R. Reid", unpublished manuscript, 1984. Manuscript deals primarily with Reid's life with an emphasis on his tenure as postmaster of Wentworth.

¹¹³Frances R. Walton, "Bits and pieces of Numa Reid", unpublished manuscript, a copy in

possession of the writer.

ollie Smith, "History of Mount Carmel Church", 1952 p. 4, unpublished manuscript, a copy of which is in the Special Collections of Rockingham Community College. Miss Smith was the recognized authority on the history of Mr. Carmel Church.

¹¹⁵Membership register, 1888-1954. Of those eighteen in 1915 only six survived as of April 1, 1986.

¹¹⁶Abstracts of the Quarterly Conference Records of the Wentworth (later Reidsville) Circuits 1921-1939 compiled by Mrs. Bettie Sue Gardner. A copy of the Abstracts is in the Special Collections of Rockingham Community College. The original quarterly conference records have since been destroyed or lost. Hereinafter cited as "quarterly abstracts",

117 Quarterly abstracts, and conversation with Mrs. J. Garfield Wilson of Wentworth, April

1981. Mrs. Wilson is now deceased.

¹¹⁸Membership register, 1888-1954.
¹¹⁹Reidsville Review clipping in writer's possession, undated.

120"Pastors, Statistics and Circuits."

¹²¹Thomas V. Crouse, "Autobiography of Rev. T.V. Crouse" unpublished manuscript circa 1945, in possession of the daughter Mrs. Fred Mitchell of Eden, N.C.

122 Quarterly Abstracts.

¹²³Conversation with Mrs. Emma M. Adams of Wentworth, April 1975 and Mrs. Lucile R. Fagg of Eden, April 1985.

124"Pastors, Statistics and Circuits."

¹²⁵Conversation sith Mrs. Emma Adams, May 1980 and with Mrs. Margaret H. Kerley, September 1985. By February 1954 the Wentworth Church had services at 10:00 am and 7:00 pm on the 2nd & 4th Sundays respectively.

¹²⁶ Conversation with Mrs. Margaret A. Perdue of Wentworth, November 1985. Mrs. Perdue was a member of the Sunday School when it was reorganized in 1951. Sunday School teachers in recent years have been: Mrs. Margaret Kerley, Mr. and Mrs. F.N. Rich, Mrs. Julia Gunn, Mrs. Margaret Perdue, Mrs. H.B. Quackenbush, Mrs. Maggie Combs, Mrs. E.E. Boyd and a Mr. Stephenson from Reidsville.

 $^{127}\mathrm{Most}$ of these changes were reversed with the restoration of the sanctuary in 1985-1986.

¹²⁸Bulletin for the Dedication Service of the Educational Building, July 3, 1955.

¹²⁹Conversation with Mrs. Emma M. Adams, May 1980.

¹³⁰Letter dated February, 1986 from Rev. Joseph W. Lasley to Michael Perdue.

¹³¹Personal knowledge.

¹³²Conversation with Mrs. Margaret A. Perdue, November 1985.

¹³³Minutes of the February 1961 meeting of the Wentworth Church Administrative Board in possession of the pastor of the Lowes' Methodist Church.

⁵³⁴...List of Pastors of the Wentworth Church 1836-1985", compliled by Michael Perdue for the above church.

¹³⁵Personal knowledge.

136 Despite the slow progress of the project at Wentworth Church, the congregation plans to commemorate the 150th anniversary of the church during the year of 1986. On May 18, 1986 the first commemorative service was held.

Ministers of Wentworth United Methodist Church

1836-1986 Compiled by Michael Perdue

Year Appointed	Minister in Charge
1836	David Nicholson
1838	William Anderson
1839	G. Brown
1840	William W. Turner
1840	W.W. Albea
1841	John Rich and W.W. Albea
1842	John Rich
1843	James D. Lumsden
1844	William Closs
1845	Philmer W. Archer and Thomas Cassodey
1846	Jeremiah Johnson (William Anderson-
	supply for 1847)
1848	William Anderson
1849	Numa Fletcher Reid
1851	David W. Doub (William Anderson, supply for 1853)
1853	Joshua Bethel (William Anderson supply for 1854)
1855	Issac W. Avent
1856	Benjamin M. Williams
1857	Alfred Norman
1859	David R. Bruton
1861	Clarendon M. Pepper
1863	William Calvin Gannon
1864	Marcus C. Thomas
1866	William Calvin Gannon
1867	Robert Graham Barrett
1868	John W. Lewis
1872	William Caphus Norman
1875	Robah F. Bumpass
1876	VanBuren A. Sharpe (and W.S. Hales for 1880)
1880	Peter L. Herman
1881	John Edwin Thompson
1883	Alex R. Raven
1884	David R. Bruton
1885	Robert Preston Troy

1890	Joseph Carson Thomas
1891	William Fletcher Womble
1895	John McCollum Price
1899	Edward J. Poe
1900	W. Legette
1901	Albert S. Raper
1905	Seymour Taylor
1908	Alexander L. Aycock
1912	A.J. Burrus
1914	Thomas C. Jordan
1916	Franklin L. Townsend
1919	Charles Fletcher Sherrill
1921	Charles P. Goode
1925	John Thomas Ratledge
1928	W. Reid Harris
1930	Thomas V. Crouse
1941	Byron Shankle
1943	John C. Swaim
1949	Claris G. Isley
1953	Joseph W. Lasley
1956	James G. Allred
1959	John P. Kincaid
1963	Edmund R. Lynn
1967	Lowell Swisher
1969	Charles L. Adams
1971	Edward L. Moore
1972	William Harris
1973	Guy Godfrey
1977	James McArn
1979	Parker H. Hager
1985	N. Ashley Randall, Jr.

The above list of ministers would apply for all Methodist Episcopal Churches in Rockingham County prior to the 1861 appointments.

Following the split of the Methodist Church in 1845, the appointments were made under the Methodist Episcopal Church, South and continued so until 1939 when reunification was achieved. Since the 1968 merger of the Methodists and the Evangelical United Brethren, all appointments have been made under the United Methodist Church.

Membership Roll of The Wentworth Methodist Episcopal Church South, January 1888.

Compiled by Michael Perdue

The following is the first known list of members for the Wentworth Church found in the membership register for the years 1888-1953. The list is divided into three sections; those who were members prior to April 1886, and still members in January 1888; those who joined in April 1886 during a revival held at Wentworth and those who joined between July 1886 and October 1887. In January 1888 when the church was placed on the Ruffin Circuit, the roll was revised and during the next seven years many new members were added. Due to the manner in which the register was kept, some rearranging was necessary. The date recorded by names may not be the date of death but when the deceased's name was removed from the church roll.

Members as of April 1886 and still Members in January 1888

Remarks

Name

R.P. Jones Elizabeth Jones John Barber Dropped from roll 5-27-1889 Cynthia Barber J. Dan Ellington Died September 1888 Mary P. Wright Mary Faucette Martha J. Mitchell Nancy A. Williams Martha J. Lomax Name dropped by Charge Conference Lucy D. Ray Moved Away Eliza P. Roach Lizzie A. Wright Pattie W. Waddill Dora E. Mitchell Maggie Hancock Name dropped 2-12-1888 Frances Roberts Thomas Harrison

John Taylor	,,	17	11
Richard Harrison	11	"	***
Mary A. Reid	11	17	2.2
Pattie E. Reid	,,	٠,	17
Anna McDonald	11	,,	5-25-1888
Martha J. Collins	,,	**	2-12-1888
Fletcher B. Jones	**		1-15-1889
S.B. Wray			
M.E. Howlett	Dro	pped	2-12-1888
Martha A. Mitchell			
Julia B. Mitchell			
Joseph B. Smothers			
William T. Barber	Mo	ved to	another church
Sarah J. Rogers			
Martha A. Barber	Die	d Oct.	17, 1891
Cynthia T. Barber			
John W. Mobley			
Virginia H. Wright			
Harriet W. Burton			
Lucy L. Hancock			
A.J. Whittemore			
Green Bailey	Wit	hdraw	n 2-10-1890
Annie M. Rosser			
James L. Price	Wit	hdraw	n by letter 2-23-1889
Adelia Wright Johnston			
Priscilla W. Smith	Dro	nned	2-12-1888
Sarah A. Haizlip	11	P. P. C.	**

Members Added To The Roll In April 1886

Name	Method of Admission	Date of Removal
James Barber	By baptism	
Andrew Barber	By baptism	
George R. Barber	By baptism	
William S. Ellington	By baptism	3-20-1893 by certificate
Mary E. Ellington	By baptism	
Maggie Hancock Jr.	By baptism	
John W. Mitchell	By baptism	Withdrawn by letter 2-

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James B. Crafton	By baptism	1-10-1888
John J. Mitchell	By baptism	
Angie Whittemore	By baptism	
Mary J. Turner	By baptism	6-10-1888
Willis Turner	By letter	6-10-1888
Polly Turner	By letter	6-10-1888
Ann Lillard	By letter	
Hattie Hancock	By baptism	
Robert M. Hancock	By baptism	
Martha F. Carter	By letter	
Thomas P. Waters	By baptism	Withdrawn 6-10-1889
James M. Rosser	By baptism	Transferred 3-11-1894
Samuel N. Waters	By baptism	
Andrew Pender	By baptism	10-3-1889
James B. Wray	By baptism	Moved away
Bettie Lillard	By letter	Died 11-3-1890
George A. Coleman	By baptism	Withdrawn

Members Who Joined Between July 1886-October 1887

Name	Date Received	Method of Admission	Date of Removal
Martha A. Mobley	7-1886	By letter	Moved to Danville Va.
Annie R. Johnston	9-1886	By letter	
Virginia Jones	1-1887	By letter	2-20-1888
Fannie Hancock	5-20-1887	By baptism	
Virginia E. Ratliffe	7-3-1887	By baptism	7-6-1895
Mattie D. Crafton	"	By baptism	1-20-1888
Fannie Coles	10-10-1887	By baptism	Died 6-4-1889
William P. Hancock	, ,,	By baptism	6-10-1889
Sallie Hancock	,,	By baptism	7-2-1894

North Carolina Volunteers in The Mexican War

by
Steve H. Bouldin
Edited by
Lindley S. Butler

Note- the following paper was written in April 1985 by Steve Bouldin of High Point while he was a senior at Duke University under the guidance of Professor Robert F. Durden.

Shortly after President James K. Polk called for troops from North Carolina, one Mexican War volunteer, Private John F. Bouldin, wrote in a letter to his father: "I delight very |much| in military duty. You all feel very near me and I regret very much to leave you all but I feel it my duty so to do." This soldier's patriotism seems to have been typical of the general attitude of the North Carolina volunteers. In May, 1846, the President requested of Governor William A. Graham that North Carolina raise a regiment of ten companies consisting of approximately one thousand men. The state responded with an outpouring of willing volunteers. Governor Graham reported that "with a most commendable promptitude, more than three times the number required tendered their service." The Tarborough Press declared that "the martial spirit is up, and Volunteers are enrolling themselves for a visit to the 'halls of the Montezumas.'...Congress and the prople are nobly responding to the call of the President." So great was the volunteer response, the ten companies required had to be chosen by lot.

The initial enthusiasm and patriotism for war service were not to survive the duration of the war. Within a short time, the feelings of the volunteers changed dramatically. Five months after his first letter, John Bouldin wrote from Mexico, this time to his younger brother: "The Volunteers are treated very badly...I would advise you to stay at home and obey your parents... When I get discharged, if I ever do, and get in N. Carolina, I never expect to leave it again....I will not deny but what I am dissatisfied." Dissatisfaction was not unique to this one soldier. Indeed, the North Carolina volunteers were so troubled that they mutinied after less than five months in Mexico.

What was the experience of the North Carolina volunteers which so dramatically changed their outlook toward war service? Nearly every aspect of their war experience lessened their initial enthusiasm. The volunteers were discomforted by the harsh Mexican environment and poor health conditions, disheartened from unimpressive war duties, and disgusted by the partisan politics which followed them to Mexico.

The Mexican War began in a curious manner. One historian has termed the conflict "an unavoidable war." The inevitability of the war was ensured by the American dream of Manifest Destiny. Obstructing the path of westward expansion were the Mexican provinces of California, New Mexico and Texas. On February 28, 1845, the United States annexed Texas as the twenty-eighth state in the Union. Mexico, though weak politically and economically, not surprisingly protested the action. President Polk sent General Zachary Taylor and a detachment of the regular army to Texas and ordered them to occupy a position on the Nueces River, then a southern border with Mexico. Polk sent John Slidell to Mexico as minister in an attempt to smmthe relations between the two countries. Slidell was rejected by the Mexican government. General Taylor was then ordered to cross the Nueces, enter disputed territory claimed by both Mexico and the United States, and proceed to a position on the Rio Grande. On May 9, 1846, Polk was prepared to recommend a declaration of war on the sole ground of the rejection of Slidell. That evening Polk received news that a band of the Mexican cavalry had attacked General Taylor's forces and killed several man. The President, assisted by his cabinet, drafted a war message which was delivered to Congress on May 11.

The political climate in North Carolina was hostile to the war. The Whig Party opposed the war and firmly controlled political power in the state. By the end of 1846, the Whig Party claimed the offices of governor, both United States Senate seats, three of the nine North Carolina seats in the House of Representatives, a majority in the state legislature and the support of a majority of the newspapers in the state. Each of these Whig spokesmen criticized with vigor the Polk administration's prosecution of the war with Mexico. Nonetheless, the North Carolina regiment was completed despite the wave of opposition, but it did not escape unscathed. Politics had sown seeds of discord which would later sprout among the volunteers in Mexico.

Early indication of the opposition in North Carolina came the day after President Polk's war message was read in Congress. A bill was introduced which called for the raising of 50,000 volunteers and an appropriation of \$10 million for the war effort." Attached to the bill was a preamble which stated "by the act of the Republic of Mexico a state of war exists between that Government and the United States." The preamble both declared war and attributed its cause to the Mexican government. Whig members in both branches of Congress questioned whether a state of war actually existed and if Polk had involved the United States in an undeclared war by

sending General Taylor to the Rio Grande. Unwilling to imperil General Taylor's forces on the Rio Grande, the Whigs would likely have supported the bill with little opposition had it been possible to separate it from the preamble.

The North Carolina newspapers of the period were highly partisan party organs. Whig and Democratic papers, in taking extremely opposing positions on every major issue of the Mexican War, waged a heated battle in the printed medium. Especially heated was the battle when a town supported both a Whig and Democratic newspaper. Such was the case in the state's capital, where the Raleigh Register (Whig) and the North Carolina Standard (Democrat) were published. Accusations of "giving aid and comfort to the enemy," of "sowing seeds of discontent among the troops" appear frequently in the first several months of 1847 when the political bickering across the state was at its zenith." The editors of these two papers did not always confine their columns to the issues of the war. Attacks became personal. The Register charged: "We are willing, on any day, to test our patriotism with the Editor of the 'Standard.'12 Each editor challenged the other to volunteer and "march to Mexico." On at least one occasion the battle in the printed medium was brought to the floor of the state legislature when Senator John Gilmer of Guilford County rose to defend himself against statements printed by the Standard. As the sole news medium of the day, newspapers greatly influenced the volunteers and all North Carolinians. Unfortunately, the highly partisan reporting heightened and inflamed division among the soldiers.

Governor Graham mirrored the objection of most other Whig leaders to the Polk administration's prosecution of the war in his biennial message of November 17, 1846, to the North Carolina legislature. Said Graham:

The United States have become engaged in war with a neighboring Republic, weaker and inferior in all the elements of National greatness. In this posture of affairs, without consultation with Congress, . . . by authority of the Executive, as Military Commander merely, our Army was made to take possession of the whole Territory in question. Resistance was attempted—hostilities insued, and we are thus involved in war...It still remains a momentous question, under our Institutions, whether Congress can be superseded in the power to make War....¹⁵

Such a statement seems hardly conducive toward the recruitment of soldiers for a volunteer regiment, a responsibility with which the Governor was charged. At the very moment the Governor's message was being read in the legislature, a letter from the Secretary of War was en route which would require almost a complete reformation of the state's volunteer regiment.

On November 16, 1846, the War Department notified Governor Graham that the terms of enlistment for the volunteer regiment had been changed.

Under the original call for troops of May 19, the terms of service were for twelve months. The new terms were for the duration of the war. Secretary William L. Marcy wrote Governor Graham: "The President now directs me to notify your Excellency that one Infantry regiment of Volunteers from your State is required for immediate service, and to be continued therein during the War with Mexico, unless sooner discharged.""

Governor Graham took the opportunity to inject politics and his opposition to the war into the selection of the field officers for the regiment. Graham strongly intimated to the legislature his desire for gubernatorial appointment of the officers as opposed to legislative appointment or election by the commissioned officers of each company or by the regiment as a whole.¹⁷ On January 14, 1847, the legislature directed the Governor to appoint field officers for the volunteer regiment.¹⁸ Governor Graham chose two anti-war Whig legislators, Robert T. Paine and John A. Fagg, as colonel and lieutenant colonel, respectively, and a Democrat, Montfort Stokes, for major. Only Montfort Stokes, a graduate of West Point, had any formal military training.¹⁹ Besides his legislative and law practice, Paine was an owner and operator of shipyards.²⁰

Criticism was immediate. The editor of the Democratic Tarborough Press retorted:

Familiar as we have become, in our editorial capacity for years, with the extravagances of party, we have never witnessed so flagrant a violation of public honor and political justice as has been exhibited by Governor Graham, in his recent appointment of the Staff Officers of our North Carolina Regiment.²⁴

Further, the Democratic editor declared that it was a shock to common sense that the two highest officers of the regiment were men "who have just voted that the war was unjust." Both Paine and Fagg had been ardent supporters of the preamble to the regimental aid bill. The *North Carolina Standard* reported, probably with some exaggeration, that during "the discussion of the infamous 'Mexican Preamble,' [Paine] shouted at the top of his voice, 'clear the lobbies, let's have a general fight.'²²

The popular favorite among the regiment for colonel was Louis D. Wilson, a Democratic state senator from Edgecombe County.²¹ Wilson, though fifty-eight years old and silver headed, resigned his seat in the Senate, volunteered for service, and raised a company of volunteers in his home county. The Senate passed a unanimous resolution lauding his patriotism.²⁴ Democratic editors were quick to point out that Louis Wilson excelled where Robert Paine was deficient. Wilson volunteered as an enlisted man and did not wait to see if he would be appointed an officer-an act of true patriotism. Wilson was from Edgecombe, a county which raised two companies, one-fifth of the whole regiment. Paine was from Chowan

County, not represented by any company. Lastly, Wilson had military experience. He had served as Brigadier General of the state militia. Following Wilson's act of patriotism in volunteering, the regiment was soon filled 26

On January 30, 1847 the *Tarborough Press* reported the regiment completed as follows:

Company A	Capt. Rich'd Long	Rowan County
Company B	Capt. Louis D. Wilson	Edgecombe
Company C	Captain Henry Roberts	Wayne
Company D	Capt. Martin Shive	Cabarrus
Company E	Capt.Tilmon Blalock	Yancey
Company F	Capt. W. E. Kirkpatrick	Cumberland
Company G	Capt. G. W. Caldwell	Mecklenburg
Company H	Capt. Wm. S. Duggan	Edgecombe
Company I	Capt. John Cameron	Orange
Company K	Capt. Geo. Williamson	Caswell ²⁷

The organization of the regiment was not to last. The political bickering in North Carolina over the war had for a time been confined to words, words which undoubtedly reached the ears of the volunteers. With the governor's appointment of field officers, the bickering escalated into action. The governor's move was the proverbial "last straw" to a portion of the volunteer regiment.

Disturbed that a Whig governor had imposed unpopular field officers on them, the company from Democratic Mecklenburg withdrew from the regiment. At the same time the Rowan Company, which had suffered from bad weather and poor accomodations, began to disappear through desertions and had to be disbanded. The disaffection of the Mecklenburg and Rowan companies did not stifle the willingness of other volunteers, and companies still assembled but had not yet been mustered into service. Upon hearing of the disbanding of the Rowan and Mecklenburg companies, John Gilmer wrote the governor recommending the company of Patrick M. Henry as a replacement:

In this County is encamped Capt P. M. Henry, with a full grown company of Volunteers, raised from the Counties of Guilford, Stokes, and Rockingham... Capt. Henry, who is a very intelligent gentleman, and a good Whig, is exceedingly anxious that he and his men may be received.. Please answer, by return mail, and if by any means possible, accept this

Company.30

Captain Henry had arrived in Guilford County early in the month of January, 1847, and "zealously engaged in the enterprise of raising a Company for the

Mexican service..." The editor of the Greensborough Patriot lauded Captain Henry: "Capt. H. Is a noble looking man, and has 'seen service' under that old veteran General Twiggs."32 The captain was the grandson of the "immortal Patrick Henry" of the Revolutionary period. Following a rally in Leaksville the company first assembled at Double Springs near Wentworth in Rockingham County where they suffered from severe winter weather and were protected only by dilapidated tents. Upon the suggestion of John Gilmer, the company moved to better quarters at Greensborough. They arrived at that place "the wettest and muddiest set of fellows you ever saw' and were given "plentiful tables, good beds, and warm fires at the hotels and at private homes."34 It was then that Captain Henry received the reply from Governor Graham about the recomendation of John Gilmer. The officers of the company in addition to Captain Henry were lientenants Peter Scales, E.W. Hancock and Joseph Martin. The company was mustered into service as Company G, and Captain Henry "forthwith took up his line of march for Wilmington," the point of embarkation for Mexico.36

As the companies journeyed from their home counties to the place of embarkation near Wilmington, the volunteers were cheered in town after town by the citizenry and were paraded as well as addressed by dignitaries. On the morning of January 28, 1847, the eighty-four officers and privates of Company G left Greensborough. "A vast crowd of citizens attended them to the corporation limits, where adieus were exchanged." The editor of the town's Whig newspaper wrote these parting words:

A more effecting scene we have rarely witnessed than the departure of these volunteers... In a voice faltering with emotion, Mr. [John] Gilmer made a short farewell address to the Company. Capt. Henry, with no less emotion followed, expressing the grateful feelings of the volunteers to the citizens of Greensboro' and vicinity for their aid and kind treatment.... The music struck up, and the Company filed away.¹⁸

The company left with contributions totalling over \$550 raised by their fellow townsmen. The company passed through Hillsborough and received the very greatest ebullition of patriotic feeling... and kindness. The Captain Henry's company of volunteers next arrived in Raleigh on the afternoon of February 2, 1847. The Raleigh Register reported:

They were received in fine style by our Military Companies & Cadets at the Corporation limits, and escorted to the Capitol, where they were welcomed in a thrilling Address by His Excellency, Gov. Graham, who complimented them very highly and deservedly too, for their patriotic spirit... ⁴¹

Remarks by Captain John H. Manly inspired and aroused "the repeated cheers of the volunteers." The company partook of refreshments prepared for them by the ladies of the city. The next morning the volunteers

arose to a heavy downpour in the cold February air and readied for the journey by rail to Fort Johnston near Wilmington. Their departure was in sharp contrast to their gay arrival in Raleigh the previous day.

The company arrived at Wilmington on the morning of February 5, 1847, dined, and proceeded by steamboat to Smithville (now Southport). It was at Smithville where the volunteer's war experience began to sour.

The scene at Fort Johnston was one of no little disorganization. Captain Henry wrote of his company's first impression:

Here we found some 5 or 6 companies in a mere nominal state of organization, and in the midst of all the confusion and tumult commonly caused by the sudden rendezvous of a considerable body of volunteer recruits. ¹⁴

Few accomodations had been prepared for the volunteers. The Raleigh Register remarked:

We regret to hear great complaints of the want of attention to the comfort of the Volunteers who have gone to Wilmington. They have...found neither clothing nor blankets provided for them. ¹⁵

Quarters were scarce. Soldiers slept six to a tent which was floored with straw or hay to serve as a bed. One company was forced to sleep on board two ships anchored in the harbor for want of other quarters.⁴⁶

Many in the regiment became ill with influenza, pneumonia, and diseases such as the mumps. By late February seventy-five men were listed on the sick list--roughly the equivalent of one whole company. Deaths occurred, including two from the company of Captain Henry. Lieutenant Peter Scales of Rockingham County, who died of pneumonia on February 12, was buried at Smithville.

Colonel Paine's first official act at Fort Johnston was to make an address to the regiment. Volunteers expecting a rousing, uplifting appeal were disappointed in their first encounter with the Colonel. One volunteer remembered the address:

[Colonel Paine] continued in the same cold, formal, studied spirit through a ten minute speech, in which the duty of obedience was fully impressed, but not one word which would serve to raise a depressed spirit or stimulate to patriotic effort. . .Col. Paine showed his entire want of attention to those little things which serve to bind the soldier to his officer. ⁵⁰

Still in their home state, only a couple of days from home, the volunteers received a foreshadowing sample of what their war experience was to be in Mexico.

North Carolina Volunteers in The Mexican War

By the first of March, 1847, the first companies of the North Carolina volunteer regiment had boarded vessels for their voyage from Smithville to the seat of war. Captain Henry and his company, along with colonel Paine, his staff, and the company of Captain Williamson, set sail in the schooner *Florida* on the fifth of March.⁵¹

Conditions aboard these vessels were poor. The $\it Fayetteville$ Observer reported:

We have heard from several persons a horrid description of the manner in which 250 men were packed away in one of the transports...in bad weather... confined below, without fresh air & probably 19/20 of them sea-sick... 52

Volunteers slept three and four to a berth. The spread of disease was not interrupted by the two-to-three week sea voyage, nor were the burials which were undoubtedly beginning to make an uneasy impression upon the volunteers. One of them wrote:

The burial at sea is peculiarly solemn and impressive. They were buried in their full uniforms, closely sewed in their military blankets; and with sinkers to their feet, were thus consigned to their watery graves. The ceremony is simple...and brought the tears to many a soldier's eye...

The majority of the regiment arrived at the scene of war in mid to late March. The schooner *Florida*, containing the company of Captain Henry, arrived off the coast of Brazos, Mexico, on March 22, 1847. The following day the company of Captain Henry was taken ashore by boat. From Brazos, they marched nine miles "to the mouth of the notorious Rio Grande." There, they were greeted by the sight of a long train of two hundred wagons and several regiments transporting supplies along the beach and then inland where the main operations of the war were positioned. Captain Henry described the scene as a "beautiful sight." His opinion of supply wagons would greatly change within the next few weeks.

Descriptions of the Rio Grande were a prominent feature in letters to friends and family back home. An early letter, dated April 11, 1847, contained the following passage:

The whole battalion was greatly surprised at the size and quality of this stream. It is a narrow but deep stream about the width of the Neuse at Shauck's Mills. Its water is cool but of a muddy cast, and its bands are low, flat alluvial lands, apparently possessing great fertilizing qualities.⁵⁶

Once the volunteers had to rely on the rivers of Mexico as their source of water descriptions became less favorable. In a letter dated June 1, 1847, another volunteer reported his happiness at "leav[ing] the sickly banks of the Rio Grande" for another camp.⁵⁷ Another letter from a North Carolina volunteer mentioned "the pestilence of the Rio Grande."

As the volunteers followed the Rio Grande into the interior of the country

they came to realize just how unfriendly the Mexican environment was. The volunteers had been warned that everything in Mexico was covered with either horns or thorns. Warnings became reality as they experienced:

tremendous horned snakes, the horned scorpions, the horned lizards and even horned frogs as well as many other horned reptiles too tedious to mention,...thorny prickly pears, the thorny muskeet, the thorny chaparral, and 1000's of other thorny combatants sticking out. 60

Volunteers found many aspects of the Mexican environment extreme and, at times, even experienced both extremes of a single spectrum. The seasons were extreme. It rarely, if ever, rained from September to April or May. At other times it rained constantly--turning everything to mud. The temperature oscillated sharply between sultry heat and piercing cold. "[O]ne lay down gasping for breath and woke up freezing...." Wrote John Bouldin: 'This climate is so hot that a person can hardly lay under the shade in the middle of the day and you can sleep under a blanket every night it is so cool. We had some hail here yesterday." According to Captain Henry the "effects of parching sun, flying sand, and arid winds...[gave] an entirely new skin to our faces by parching off the old." By the end of the four-day march up the Rio Grande to Matamoros, Captain Henry had concluded: "The great scarcity of water, the oppressive heat, the flying volumes of sand everywhere... caused me to incline to the opinion that this is an arduous service."

From Matamoros, the volunteers travelled further up the Rio Grande toward Camargo. A Maryland volunteer described the march:

Left Matamoros, to march with the brigade to Camargo, distant from 130 to 150 miles... Our march was over desert rather than a mountainous country... |T]he only water to be had |was| found in ponds... in which rainwater had been collected for the use of the cattle.... When we reached a pond, which was nothin but a hog-wallow, men and horses rushed pellmell frantically into it, all semblance of rank and organization forgotten and disregarded. ⁶⁵

The first week of April, 1847, the North Carolina volunteers arrived at Camargo, a town described by one soldier as "this hottest of all hot places." ⁶⁶ Camp life continued to be unpleasant in Camargo. The tents in which the soldiers slept often could not protect them from even a heavy dew. During the rainy season articles remained thoroughly soaked. ⁶⁷ When the cold season approached, soldiers banked their tents with earth to keep the wind out. ⁶⁸ Food was another privation to be overcome by the volunteer. John F. Bouldin wrote from Camargo:

I get milk from the mexicans at one pickyune a tin cup full, a pickyune is 6½ cents. But it is goats milk. And when I get it I strain the hairs and dirt out of it with my handkerchief. And you may depend, it is (much awayner) that means very good, but it would have vomited me last year when I was at home. §9

At Camargo the only source of drinking water was from the San Juan River. Private Bouldin continued:

The San Juan River [is] the nastiest river in the whole world... I had as soon drink the water out of Fathers tanvats after it had been run in there 3 weeks. Oh it is awful. It looks Green and you can hardly see it run. And it is warm as milk from the can.⁷⁰

Mexican natives regarded Camargo as the sickliest place in that region of Mexico. And sick the North Carolina volunteers did become. The regiment suffered severely from dysentery, ,typhoid fever, pneumonia, epilepsy, and yellow fever. Private Bouldin described his illness:

After staying here [at Camargo] 3 or 4 days I was attacked with the (Diarrhoea) and it weakened me so fast that in 4 or 5 days I could hardly walk... The health of the reg't is very bad... Some of the other companies have lost from 10 to 12 men.⁷¹

By the first of May the daily sick reports of the regiment averaged more than a hundred, and at the worst times over two hundred. Many succumbed to these illnesses. Captain Henry wrote in mid-August of the North Carolina regiment: "We came into the country with an aggregate strength of 830 and now that strength is not more than 650."

When the North Carolina regiment arrived at Camargo, the army under General Taylor was in the process of moving supplies and provisions to Monterey, in as large amounts as possible, before the rainy season commenced and muddy roads would be almost impassable. Employed in the movement were nearly eight hundred wagons and about two thousand pack mules. Companies E and G received the first assignment of guarding a train of wagons to Monterey. Captain Henry described the Tar Heels' assignment: "My company...[was] sent forward after arriving here with 150 laden wagon and many horses and mules to Monterey..." To make their assignment even worse, the two companies were ordered to countermarch with an empty train of wagons they had met just before reaching Monterey." The volunteers experienced keen disappointment:

On our march back we met another large laden train escorted by the Caswell and New Hanover companies...[T] hey may get to see the lovely and far-famed Monterey before we do if they do not counter march with an empty train also. ⁷⁶

After a month of escorting wagon trains, Captain Henry admitted to the folk back home that the regiment was destined for that kind of service for some time.

The supply duty was an arduous task, both physically and emotionaller for it meant continuous marching over difficult Mexican terrain. "The face of the country betweet Camargo and Monterey is one continual broken wilderess, up hill and down dale...," one volunteer reported. The volun-

teers endured "as an escort to a wagon train bound for Monterey, a gruelling march of about 125 miles through dusty chaparral country under a broiling sun." The pack mules presented frustrating problems:

It took several hours to get ready to start each morning, and by the time we were ready some of the mules first loaded would be tired of standing so long with their loads on their backs. Sometimes one would start to run, bowing his back and kicking up until he scattered his load; other|s| would lie down and try to disarrange their loads by attempting to get on the top of them by rolling on them....

When the volunteers enlisted they likely pictured themselves bravely combatting Mexican bandits in fierce battle. The reality of their war experience was disheartening. In their letters, the volunteers attempted to disguise their disappointment and any embarrassment over the unimpressive war duties. One volunteer wrote:

We are all in fine spirits and training, and panting for a fight.... We expect to conduct very large train up to Monterey in a day or so, and as it will be a very valuable and important one we fully expect to have to fight all the way up. *1

Captain Henry was no different:

We were much in expectation to meet [Mexican General Antonio] Canales on our route...[H]e was about 20 miles [away]...with only about 30 men....[W]e lost all hope of a fight....§2

Another volunteer apparently found refuge in the fact that the regiment became skilled in their escort duties:

They have performed this duty so cheerfully, and with such alacrity, that Capt. Solman, of the Regulars, told me it was decidedly the best and most punctual Regiment ever at this place, the Regulars not excepted.^{N-1}

Often when a captain received the order to march as escort, a dozen or more of his men were too ill to march and had to be left behind in hospitals. Some companies had left men in hospitals trailing all the way back to Brazos. In early June those healthy enough to march in the North Carolina regiment were moved from Camargo to Saltillo. The news was gladly received by one volunteer:

I suppose we will remain in Monterey about a week then push on to Saltillo... Saltillo is one of the healthiest and most pleasant cities in Mexico, situated among high towering mountains and commanding a fine view of the country around.⁸⁵

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By August, the "unfortunate, but noble and gallant young soldiers [who] had been left sick...had partially recovered and joined us at Saltillo..." "6

While in Saltillo the company of Captain Henry received a respite from the supply duties. The New Orleans Picayune reported:

[T]wo Companies of the North Carolina Regiment have been ordered to the support of Capt. Prentiss's battery, on the hill above Saltillo. One of these Companies, commanded by Capt. Henry, is the crack corps of the Regiment....⁸⁷

This assignment raised the spirits of those volunteers in Company G, as it was the closest any company of the regiment had come or would come to actual battle.

The assignment was one bit of evidence showing that Company G was outstanding among the other companies of the regiment. Captain Henry agreed: "[O]n account of my military experience, my company has in many ways had advantages over all others in the regiment..." Still, volunteers of Company G were typical of Volunteers of all regiments. Captain Henry continued in his letter dated August 15, 1847:

[I]t is the great fault of the volunteers, that they came here too much in the expectation of being free from all the restrictions of true discipline and the requirements of the 'regulations.'... [H]ow difficult it is to bring volunteers to appreciate properly their change from the civil to the military life...⁸⁹

The very night Captain Henry wrote this letter saw the beginning of the mutiny by some North Carolina volunteers, a mutiny brought on in part by their distaste for discipline.

Early in the month of August, 1847, Colonel Paine instituted an outdated form of punishment--a wooden horse upon which serious offenders were forced to sit for long periods of time. 90 On August 14 over a hundred volunteers from the Virginia and Mississippi regiments entered the North Carolina camp and began to ridicule the horse. After partially destroying the horse, the crowd dispersed. The following evening a crowd of Virginia and North Carolina volunteers again massed. Some members of the crowd gathered near Colonel Paine's tent, threw stones at his tent, and made insulting remarks. Others jeered the lieutenant colonel, John Fagg, who was outside his tent sick and vomiting. Two Virginians were arrested and subsequently the crowd dispersed. During the ruckus, several North Carolina companies either refused or were slow in responding to Paine's orders to help quell the uprising.31 Later that evening, at boaut 9:30, the crowd again gathered near Paine's tent and commenced throwing stones. As Paine ran from his tent those in the crowd began to run. Several times Paine ordered them to halt; if they did not, he warned, he would open fire. When none heeded his warnings, he discharged his pistol into the crowd, wounding two men, one of them mortally.92

The day following the mutiny, a petition, bearing the signatures of nearly every officer in the regiment, was curculated (and later withdrawn) which requested the resignation of Paine. Two officers were dishonorable discharged (though later reinstated by President Polk) as a result of the mutiny. Paine was cleared of any wrongdoing in his actions to quell the mutiny.

The mutiny again stirred political brawling which had begun before the regiment was formed. A portion of that which incited the volunteers to mutiny may be attributed to a distaste for military discipline: however, many North Carolina volunteers maintained a particular dislike for their officers, Paine and Fagg. After months of political opposition to the war, the partisan appointment of the two officers had been a catalyst for two companies to disband. Largely due to Colonel Paine's sternness, the disaffection toward the officers did not improve over the course of the war. On numerous occasions volunteers complained of Paine's wrath at petty offenses." Moreover, Colonel Paine came to symbolize all the partisan politics which surrounded the formation of the regiment. When coupled with the other discomforts of the war, dislike for Paine and Fagg became another "last straw" for the regiment.

Following the mutiny, the letter of one volunteer described the endurance over the physical hardships of war service:

Men who had never seen the sea or a ship in their lives, [who] slept on the bare planks amid the horrors of sea sickness...never murmured! In the long march over burning sands....surrounded by every tormenting insect and venomous reptile, they never murmured! And, worst of all, when death...invaded their camp, men whose every former pain had been watched on beds of down...and linen pillows, suffered and died on the camp blanket or a wisp of straw, without a murmur!⁶⁵

It was partisan politics which antagonized the volunteers. The volunteer continued:

The whole history of the raising and officering of this Regiment is fresh in the memory of every man....[T]he movements of the State Executive were of that cold and repulsive character...to dampen all ardor and to chill patriotic inspiration.... The great men of the State published to the world that the war was 'unjust, uncalled for,' 'the President's war,' 'a war of rapine and robbery,' &c.... Then came the offering of the Regiment. The appointment of the Colonel was a sad disappointment to many...[Colonel Paine], having no pretensions to military talents, [was] only a violent partizan of that political party.....⁹⁵

The volunteers could not separate Paine, their strict disciplinarian colonel, from Paine, the partisan politician. One role might have been tolerated but the combination was unbearable.

Following the mutiny, Paine became less harsh. The number of volunteers disabled by illness stabilized and soon decreased. During the winter,

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peace negotiations began and on February 2, 1848, a treaty of peace between Mexico and the United States was signed. The North Carolina regiment returned home during the summer of 1848 to a welcome but not extravagant reception. One volunteer from Rockingham County remarked that "nearly all who left Whigs have returned Democrats."

The dramatic change in the outlook of the volunteers toward war service from the outpouring of volunteers when the first call for troops came to mutiny a year later--cannot simply be dismissed as the reaction of soft recruits seeing was in actuality and experiencing a change of heart. The influences which guided the North Carolina volunteers away from their initial enthusiasm were extraordinary. Though the regiment did not begin its war service until its arrival in Mexico in March, 1847, its war experience began much earlier. Before setting sail from Smithville the volunteers had experienced months of political fighting. The volunteers' governor, their legislature, their representatives in Congress, their colonel, and in some cases, even their hometown newspaper had strongly complained about the unjustness of the cause they were about to undertake. It is not suprising that some volunteers chose to end their war experience prematurely. The North Carolina volunteer should be admired for his endurance of the physical and emotional hardships, overcrowded tents and ships, weeks of sea sickness, burials at sea, the scorching Mexican sun, the thorns, diarrhea, death, tedious escorting of pack mules, and an overbearing colonel. The mutiny was but a culmination of continual had fortune which marked the experience of the North Carolina volunteers in the Mexican War.

Notes

¹John F. Bouldin, Letter to John Bouldin, undated, James O. Bouldin Papers, Manuscripts Department, Duke University Library, Durham, N.C. John F. Bouldin was the brother of the author's great-great-grandfather.

²William K. Boyd, *History of North Carolina* (Chicago: Lewis Publishing Co., 1919), II, 285.

³ Journals of the Senate and House of Commons, 1846-1847, 279.

⁴Tarborough Press, May 27, 1846, as quoted in Hugh T. Lefler, History of North Carolina, I, (New York: Lewis Publishing Co., 1956), 374-375.

⁵John F. Bouldin, Letter to James O. Bouldin, May 3, 1847, James O. Bouldin Papers, Manuscripts Department, Duke University Library, Durham, N.C. For enhanced readability the "sic" notation has been omitted from all quotations.

⁶K. Jack Bauer, The Mexican War, 1846-1848 (New York: Macmillan, 1974), xix.

Bauer, p. 67.

⁸North Carolina Standard (Raleigh), January 19, 1848, hereinafter cited as North Carolina Standard; Hugh T. Lefler and Albert R. Newsome, North Carolina (Chapel Hill, N.C.: University of North Carolina Press, 1963), 330-331

Congressional Globe, 29 Cong., 1 sess., XVI, 791

¹⁰Congressional Globe, 29 Cong., 1 sess., XVI, 795.

¹¹See, for example Weekly Raleigh Register and North Carolina Gazette, January 1, February 2, February 26, and March 12, 1847, hereinafter cited as Raleigh Register.

12 Raleigh Register, January 29, 1847.

13 Raleigh Register, January 29, 1847.

14 Raleigh Register, January 1, 1847.

¹⁵ Journals of the Senate and House of Commons, 1846-1847, 280-281.

¹⁶William L. Marcy, Letter to William A. Graham, November 16, 1846, in *The Papers of William Alexander Graham*, III, ed. J. G. de Roulhac Hamilton (Raleigh: State Department of Archives and History, 1960), p. 149.

17 Journals of the Senate and House of Commons, 1846-1847, 279-280.

¹⁸ James Graham, Letter to William A. Graham, January 10, 1847, in *The Papers of William Alexander Graham*. III, ed. J. G. de Roulhac Hamilton (Raleigh: State Department of Archives and Hisory, 1960), p. 171.

19 Raleigh Register, February 9, 1847.

²⁰Biographical Directory of the American Congress, 1774-1927 ed. (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1928), 1382.

²¹ Tarborough Press, January 30, 1847.

²²North Carolina Standard, October 27, 1847.

²³Boyd, p. 286.

²⁴ Journals of the Senate and House of Commons, 1846-1847, 132-133.

²⁵Tarborough Press, January 30, 1847.

²⁶Samuel A. Ashe, History of North Carolina (Raleigh: Edwards & Broughton, 1925), II, 456

²⁷ Tarborough Press, January 30, 1847.

²⁸Charlotte Jeffersonian, January 22, 1847, as quoted in the Raleigh Register, February 9, 1847. Green W. Caldwell, Letter to R. W. Haywood, January 25, 1847 in *The Papers of Willie Person Mangum*, V, ed. Henry Shanks (Raleigh: State Department of Archives and History, 1956), p. 32.

²⁹Raleigh Register, February 9, 1847. Green W. Caldwell, Letter to S. L. Fremont, January 27, 1847, in *The Papers of Willie Person Mangum*, ed. Henry Shanks (Raleigh: State Department of Archives and History, 1956), p. 33.

³⁰ John A. Gilmer, Letter to William A. Graham, January 23, 1847, in *The Papers of William*

North Carolina Volunteers in The Mexican War

Alexander Graham, III. ed. J. G. de Roulhac Hamilton (Raleigh: State Department of Archives and History, 1960), p. 176-177.

31 Greensborough Patriot, January 9, 1847.

32 Greensborough Patriot, January 9, 1847.

33 Greensborough Patriot, January 30, 1847; North Carolina Standard, February 3, 1847; Raleigh Register, February 5, 1847.

Greensborough Patriot, January 30, 1847.

³⁵E. W. Hancock (1817-1887) of the Wentworth area also served as a lieutenant and later as colonel in the North Carolina Senior Reserves during the Civil War.

36 Raleigh Register, February 2, 1847.

37 Greensborough Patriot, January 30, 1847.

38 Greensborough Patriot, January 30, 1847.

³⁹ Greensborough Patriot, January 30, 1847; John A. Gilmer, Letter to William A. Graham, January 27, 1847, in The Papers of William Alexander Graham, III, ed. J. G. de Roulhac Hamilton (Raleigh: State Department of Archives and History, 1960), p. 178.

40 Greensborough Patriot, May 29, 1847.

11 Raleigh Register, February 5, 1847.

⁴²Raleigh Register, February 5, 1847.

43 Greensborough Patriot, February 13, 1847.

14 Greensborough Patriot, May 29, 1847.

45 Raleigh Register, February 9, 1847.

Favetteville Carolinian, as quoted in the Greensborough Patriot, March 6, 1847.

17 Greensborough Patriot, February 20, 1847.

Favetteville Carolinian, as quoted in the Greensborough Patriot, March 6, 1847.

¹⁹Raleigh Register, February 19, 1847. Greensborough Patriot February 20, 1847. North Carolina Standard, November 3, 1847.

51 Raleigh Observer, as quoted in the Greensborough Patriot, March 6, 1847. ⁵²Fayetteville Carolinian, as quoted in the Greensborough Patriot, March 6, 1847.

53 Raleigh Register, June 4, 1847.

54 Raleigh Register, May 14, 1847.

55 Greensborough Patriot, May 29, 1847.

⁵⁶Raleigh Register, May 14, 1847.

⁵⁷Greensborough Patriot, June 26, 1847.

⁵⁸North Carolina Standard, November 3, 1847.

⁵⁹ Greensborough Patriot, January 9, 1847.

⁶⁰Greensborough Patriot, May 29, 1847.

⁶¹ Justin H. Smith, The War With Mexico (New York: Macmillan, 1919), I, 143.

62 John F. Bouldin, Letter to James O. Bouldin, May 3, 1847, James O. Bouldin Papers, Manuscripts Department, Duke University Library, Durham, N.C.

⁶³Greensborough Patriot, May 29, 1847.

⁶⁴Greensborough Patriot, May 29, 1847.

65 George Winston Smith and Charles Judah, Chronicles of a Gringo (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1968), p. 75.

⁶⁶Smith, The War With Mexico, p. 143.

67 Smith, The War With Mexico, p. 143.

⁶⁸Smith, The War With Mexico, p. 143.

⁶⁹John F. Bouldin, Letter to James O. Bouldin, May 3, 1847, James O. Bouldin Papers, Manuscripts Department, Duke University Library, Durham, N.C.

- ⁷⁰John F. Bouldin, Letter to James O. Bouldin, May 3, 1847, James O. Bouldin Papers, Manuscripts Department, Duke University Library, Durham, N.C.
- ⁷¹John F. Bouldin, Letter to James O. Bouldin, May 3, 1847, James O. Bouldin Papers, Manuscripts Department, Duke University, Durham, N.C.
 - ⁷²Greensborough Patriot, September 25, 1847.
 - 73 Greensborough Patriot, September 25, 1847.
 - "Greensborough Patriot, May 29, 1847
 - 75 Raleigh Register, June 18, 1847.
 - 76 Greenshorough Patriot May 29
 - Greensborough Patriot, May 29, 1847.
 - ⁷⁸Raleigh Register, June 18, 1847.
- ⁷⁹Lee A. Wallace, Jr., "The First Regiment of Virginia Volunteers, 1846-1848," The Virginia Magazine of History and Biography, 77, No. 1 (1969), 59-60.
- Smith and Judah, Chronicles of a Gringo, p. 77
- ⁸¹Raleigh Register, May 14, 184
- ⁸²Greensborough Patriot, May 29, 1847
- 83 Raleigh Register, June 18, 1847
- * North Carolina Standard, July 7, 1847.
- 85 Greensborough Patriot, June 26, 1847
- 86 Raleigh Register, September 15, 184
- 87 New Orleans Picayune, as quoted in the Raleigh Register, September 22, 1847.
- 88 Greensborough Patriot, September 25, 1847.
- 89 Greensborough Patriot, September 25, 1847.
- 90 Wallace, p. 66.
- ⁹¹Smith and Judah, Chronicles of a Gringo, p. 426.
- ⁹²Wallace, p. 66.
- "North Carolina Standard, October 27, 1847.
- "North Carolina Standard, November 3, 1847.
- 95 North Carolina Standard, November 3, 1847.
- North Carolina Standard, August 2, 1848

A Roster of Soldiers in Logan's Guards

Compiled by Robert W. Carter, Jr.

This list of names was taken from The Greensborough Patriot. January 30, 1847. The company had a total of 82 men of which 42 were from RockinghamCounty, 25 from Guilford County and 15 from Stokes County.

Officers

Patrick M. Henry, Captain; Peter Scales, First Lieut.; E.W. Hancock, Second Lieut.; Sr.; James P. Wright, First Corporal; Joseph Martin, Second Lieut., Jr.; P.B. Stubblefield, Second Corporal; Lewis Philips, First Sergeant; Alex M. Strong, Second Sergeant; D.W. Stubblefield, Fourth Corporal;

John Johns, Third Sergeant; Charles B. Ogburn, Fourth Sergeant; Arthur Johnson, Third Corporal;

Musicians:

Thomas Sartin, Fifer:

Robert Hopper, Drummer,

Privates

Norwood Armfield Green Brizendine: John T. Boling: Calvin Buchanan: Jeremiah Beavers: Daniel Barns: Calvin Bacon; Neil Brown: Peter Cox; Columbus Cox Richard Cardwell James Covington Eli Cline George Cummings John Davis Samuel Franklin

Richard Fitzgerald Burwell Flannagan Henry Greenwood William E. Harris Andrew M. Holderby Daniel Hall Samuel Hudgins Peter Hoffman Isaac Harvey William Harrell Israel Hughes Hosea Holder A.W.H. Jones Pendleton Jones Jesse C. Kirby Junius A. Krouse

James Lane Peter Luckabill James Lovd William A. Lewis Ward Mustin Eli O. Marv Menoah Mayah Jackson Newnan Lexey Newnan Charles Norman Samuel D. Newson Benj. F. Ore James Proctor David Pratt

Franklin Powers

William J. Robertson William W. Robertson	James Starrett Patrick H. Satterfield	Samuel H. Tomlin Frederick Tatum
Joseph W. Roberts	William B. Stephens	Elisha Tue
Willis Russell	William Stewart	Rufus Wright
Robert J. Sapp	Augustine Smith	' Robert Wilson
Morris Struder	John Taylor	John Wardlow
William Scott	George Tomason	William T. Wadlington

The William B. Stephens Letter - 1847

Transcribed by Robert W. Carter, Jr.

Editor's note - Cora Ann Turner of Eden, North Carolina, discovered among some family papers a letter written by William B. Stephens while he was serving as a soldier in the Mexican War. Stephens, a resident of Guilford County, appears to have been a son of Allen and Nancy Bunch Stephens who were married in 1821. He married Nancy Landingham in Guilford County during the month of February 1838. Stephens lived in the Oak Ridge area when he enlisted in Logan's Guards in Greensboro. No other information is available on the Stephens Family at this time.

The letter, dated July 1, 1847, is very difficult to read because of the grammar, spelling and punctuation. For these reasons the letter has been transcribed in modern form.

To John M. Bunch Guilford County, Oak Ridge, Post Office North Carolina. From the Army.

> Saltillo, Mexico July 1, 1847

My Dear beloved wife and little children,

Tis once more with pleasure that I take this opportunity to write you a few lines concerning my health. I am well at this time as to health but I hope that these few lines may find you all in good health and all my endearing friends. My leg is swollen very bad. I have been sick 3 months but thank God I am getting my flesh as fast as I oughter and feel well as ever I did all to my leg it will turn out to be a white swelling I am afraid.

I have wrote four letters and ain't heard one word from you all since I left Smithville. I do want to hear from you all bad enough. Nancy I expect that you need my help as bad as you can. I haint drawed a dollar yet. The company left me at Camargo and they drawed their money at Monterrey and all the money this drawed is gold and silver and there is now chance to send it home. There is treasure notes. He calls for \$50. _____ and ____ will send \$25. apiece to Greensborough to Gilmore and then you can attend to it if you please and draw my \$25. and spend it to the use of my family, Uncle John, if you please. This is all the chance that I now (see?). Shall send you a letter when I start the money so that you can attend to it.

You wish to know something about the army and all that I know I will write and the truth with the rest satisfied is well maybe is well layd and all the Guilford boys. There has been (four?) deaths in our company, (Dr. Sat?) Scott, Hall, (and) Covington. We have 45 of our company this morning that (reported) for duty.

Now I will tell you something about their markets and their prices. They have beef (at) 7¢ (a pound), mutton (at) 10¢, goat (at) 10¢ and pork (at) 25¢ in abundance,____peas, lettuce, cabbage, cheese, milk, onions, watermellons, mushmellons, rosen ears' and many things that I don't know the name of.

We are the best looking company in the regiment. We garrison this town, guard this place, we and 2 Virginia companies. General Wooll' is 6 miles from town with about 4,000 men and they are still coming in. We______here with our enemy that don't like to see us in their town but they have to grin and bear it there just the cobber of Thomas' teaster. They are a moderate nation of people. I wish you to see the old lady and all my kind to hear from me for God knows when I shall get back but guess as soon as time can work the pet out of old_____.

I have seen General Taylor" - he is (just) like old Uncle Jesse Sanders'
____as one pea is like another.

Drill is here now and I haint time (to) write all that I wish write. Tell A. Weaver here is the country to make money. Tell him (and) J. Landingham to come here free men and all other young men that loves to make money and they can make \$25, per month driving wagons and there is many other ways. I hant nothing more to write - only write to the North Carolina Regiment, Mexico, Logan's Guards. So (good) will friends and relations, William B. Stephens

NOTES

¹Smithville is now Southport, North Carolina

²Camargo is in north central Mexico.

³Monterrey is about 300 miles southeast of Camargo.

⁴This is John M. Bunch, Stephens' uncle to whom the letter is addressed.

⁵William Scott.

[&]quot;Daniel Hall.

^{&#}x27;James Covington.

Another name for a cantaloupe.

[&]quot;Corn picked to cook while immature.

[&]quot;General John E. Wool.

¹¹General Zachary Taylor (1784-1850) became a national hero after the Battle of Buena Vista and served as President of the United States from 1849 to 1850 when he died.

¹²Jesse Sanders was probably a resident of the Oak Ridge area of Guilford County.

Abraham Weaver signed William B. Stephens' marriage bond in 1838.

¹J. Landingham was a relative of Stephens' wife.

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The Journal of Rockingham County History and Genealogy



The Rockingham County Historical Society, Inc.

The journal is published semiannually in June and December by the Rockingham County Historical Society, Box 84, Wentworth, N.C. 27375. Members of the society, for which the annual dues are \$8.00 for an individual and \$12.00 for a family membership, recieve the journal. Single issues may be purchased for \$3.50 per number plus 40 cents mailing charge.

Editorial Policy

The publication committee is interested in receiving articles on the history and genealogical source materials of Rockingham County and the adjacent area. The historical articles must be well written and thoroughly documented. Genealogical articles should consist of previously unpublished primary source materials pertaining to Rockingham County, such as abstract of local records and edited diaries, letters, or church records. Papers on family history should not be submitted. All copy, including footnotes, should be typed double-space. Articles and correspondence should be sent to the editor: Robert W. Carter, Jr., Route 2, Box 392, Reidsville, N.C. 27320.

Cover Illustration

Salem United Methodist Church, the 1892 sanctuary prior to the renovations of the early 1950's.

Photograph from The Reidsville Review, December 7, 1973.

The Journal of Rockingham County History and Genealogy

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A HISTORY OF SALEM UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

1799 - 1986

by

Frances R. Brown

Editor's note: Frances Rebecca Brown is a retired schoolteacher. She resides at "Oakhurst", her ancestral home west of Reidsville.

EARLY PIONEERS

Around the middle of the eighteenth century there began a great influx of new settlers into colonial North Carolina. They came chiefly from Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Maryland, and Virginia. Many of them made their long and arduous trek over "The Great Wagon Road" which extended from Philadelphia southward through the Shenandoah Valley branching off into several directions into North Carolina."

These pioneers brought little with them except their families. They had various reasons for coming, however, many had a desire to move to less crowded frontier area, to claim land, build their cabins, clear the forest and to farm. When these settlers were at last able to file claims, a large number did so.²

The early Rockingham County settlers were mostly of English and Scotch-Irish stock. Eventually, three church denominations became predominant: the Presbyterian, the Baptist and the Methodist. The Methodists were the last to become established in this area although circuit riders were in North Carolina as early as 1776.

EARLY METHODISM IN NORTH CAROLINA

The Methodist Church evolved from the Methodist "societies" within the Anglican Church. Inspired by missionary preachers sent from England by John Wesley, the societies continued to increase in all areas along the eastern coast of the American Colonies.

The first formal organization of the Methodist Episcopal Church in the United States took place at Baltimore in December 1784, after the American Revolution. At this meeting Francis Asbury and Thomas Coke were chosen as "Superintendents" (later known as bishops). This was the first denomination organized in America entirely independent of the English connection and it was governed by ministers. This form of government was later changed to include lay persons as well as clergy. In 1785, the first annual conference of this new church organization was held near Louisburg, North Carolina, the official beginning of the Methodist Church in North Carolina.

A large portion of North Carolina was placed in the Virginia Methodist Episcopal Conference which was formally created in 1802.

METHODISM COMES TO ROCKINGHAM COUNTY

During the 1780's and 1790's, a group of settlers from Dorchester County, Maryland, (also, a few from Delaware) emigrated south to Rockingham County. They settled on the headwaters of Wolf Island and Little Troublesome Creek which is now in present-day Reidsville. Many of these settlers were of Methodist background in Maryland and Delaware and, eventually, organized their first services or "class meeting" in their log houses until a meeting house was built, usually on a class leader's property.

Itinerant preachers, called circuit riders, were traveling in the area at this time. Among them was the noted Bishop Francis Asbury who, in his journal, records several visits to Rockingham County giving information as to the dates and places visited, subject matter preached and of the welfare of the settlers. Also, Reverend James Meacham, the Presiding Elder of the Salisbury District which included the Rockingham County area in 1794-95, kept a journal of his experiences mentioning a number of local families.

These early circuit riders played an important part in stimulating renewed activities among these Methodist settlers, leading the way for the appearance of organized Methodist churches in eastern Rockingham County.

According to recorded deeds at the Rockingham County Courthouse, the first three known Methodist churches were: Lowe's formed in 1796; Salem, in 1799; and Smith's by 1800 in present-day Reidsville.¹⁰

It seems obvious that with Lowe's only three miles southeast of Smith's and Salemonly three miles northwest of Smith's, there were three Methodist churches within a radius of about six miles. This proved to be too many churches for such a small area. Therefore, Smith's became nonexistent during the mid 1830's.11

FIRST DEED FOR SALEM CHURCH

On January 19, 1799, John Granger sold to Edward Woolen, Absalem Goosetree, Joseph Asbridge, Henry Kilman, and Patrick Wardlow, Trustees for the Methodist Society:

one acre of land... on Wolf Island... beginning on the north side of the road leading from the courthouse to Danville, being a tract of land on which I now live: They yeilding free worship to every Methodist preacher to preach... including the spring. 12

In this 1799 deed, the spring is 640 feet south of the one acre church lot. This appears to place the first Salem Church some distance west of the present sanctuary, probably on the present Chinqua-Penn farm. The field across the road from the present Salem Church was known as "Granger's Old Field." ¹³

SALEM'S FIRST TRUSTEES

Of the first trustees of Salem, several came from Marvland. Edward Woolen was born in 1762 and came from Dorchester County, Maryland, about 1796. His brother, Levin Woolen, was one of the first trustees of Smith's in 1800. Edward Woolen later migrated to Wilson County, Tennessee. Absalem Goosetree came from Dorchester County, Maryland, and served as a Revolutionary soldier before coming to Rockingham County about 1796.14 Joseph Asbridge (1750-1835) was born in Maryland and served in the Revolutionary War, Asbridge came to Rockingham County and later moved to and died in Caldwell County, Kentucky. 15 Henry Kilman came to Rockingham County about 1796 and purchased land on Wolf Island Creek near the other trustees. He and his family later lived in Monroe and Cumberland Counties, Kentucky, and finally settled in the Overton County, Tennessee area. 16 Patrick Wardlow's family received land grants in the 1780's east of the Salem Church area along Wolf Island Creek. The Wardlows were possibly from Maryland. Patrick died in 1807 in Rockingham County.17

EARLY CIRCUITS AND DISTRICTS

From the beginning Salem Church was a preaching point on the

Guilford Circuit which included Guilford and Rockingham Counties. The pastors assigned to this circuit for 1799 were Robert Wilkerson and George McKenny. Also, by the late 1790's, the idea of the church government was made more complex with the creation of districts which supervised the various circuits in its designated area but was subject to the jurisdiction of the General Conference. The first district to which the Guilford Circuit belonged was the Salisbury District from 1801 to 1808. In 1808 the Guilford Circuit was moved to the Yadkin District which was newly created. This Yadkin District took in a considerable portion of Western North Carolina.¹⁸

ARRIVAL OF THE JOHN MEADOR FAMILY

Migration continued to be steady in the first quarter of the nineteenth century. Many came from Virginia as did John Meador (1768-1844) and wife, Nancy Flippen Meador (1779-after 1830), in 1821. From Prince Edward County, Virginia, the Meadors brought with them their eight children: William J., Wilson, Thomas, Francis James, Jesse, John Robert, Mary Jane, and Joseph. A purchase of 491 acres of land was made and they settled on the upper reaches of the Wolf Island Creek, a part of which now lies within the city limits of Reidsville. Their old cabin, long since weather boarded and enlarged, is still standing (1986). With the arrival of the John Meador family, Salem Church took on new life and the family's influence upon this church has continued to the present day.

The name of Salem appears in the earliest surving records of the Guilford Circuit Quarterly Conference on June 14, 1834, when Salem gave \$2.00 as its circuit apportionment. In August 1834, Salem gave \$5.00. In May 1835, \$3.50 was given to the Quarterly Conference by Salem. On April 30, 1836, the Guilford Circuit Quarterly Conference met at Salem; and Thomas G. Wisdom is listed as class leader. William C. Wisdom was appointed a steward. Salem was listed as "New Salem" in the April 1836 conference minutes. Apparently Salem was called New Salem for a few years after the church was built on a new lot in 1833.²¹

In 1834 the Guilford Circuit was placed back in the Salisbury District where it remained until early 1837 when the Guilford Circuit was divided. The Rockingham County churches were formed into a new circuit known as the Rockingham Circuit and was placed in the Danville District. In January 1838, much of the Danville District, as well as a large part of North Carolina, was placed in the

newly created North Carolina Methodist Episcopal Conference. No further changes in the district arrangements were made until 1850.²²

SALEM'S SECOND DEED

On September 3, 1833, the Salem Trustees purchased a new church lot of four acres from Baker Shreve. The location of these four acres is at the present site of Salem Church and lay in the forks of the road "below Granger's Old Field" and on the east side adjoined the old Wardlow line and included the "privilege of using a spring near a Shady Rock north of the church about 200 yards." 23

The Salem Trustees in 1833 were Thomas G. Wisdom who, in 1826, purchased a 297 acre tract on Wolf Island Creek and built a house located south of Salem church;²¹ John Meador (1768-1844); Wilson Meador (1802-1863), a son of John Meador; Francis James Meador (1808-1870), another son of John Meador, who married Catherine W. Edwards, the daughter of Reverend George R. Edwards, a noted Methodist minister of Rockingham County;²⁵ Lloyd Waters (1797-1846), who married Ann Edwards, another daughter of Reverend George R. Edwards;²⁶ John Guerrant (born 1808), and Daniel Guerrant (born 1804), active Methodists in the Mount Carmel Church area.²⁷

SALEM'S THIRD DEED

In 1844, the Methodist Episcopal Church divided over slavery. The result was the formation of two General Conferences: The Methodist Episcopal Church in the North and the Methodist Episcopal Church, South. A plan of separation was worked out, but in 1848 this was rejected by the northern conference, and legal proceedings were instigated by the southern conference. The case was carried to the United States Supreme Court which upheld the Plan of Separation. About the time of the legal case, in 1848, many of the Methodist Episcopal Churches in the South had their trustees deed their properties over to new trustees of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, in the event that the legal case was lost. ²⁸

In the case of Salem Church, the 1848 deed is the same lot which was purchased in 1833.²⁹ The old trustees: Thomas G. Wisdom, William Meador, Francis James Meador and Daniel E. Guerrant sold the church property to the new Salem trustees who were John

Gunn (1806-1869);³⁰ James Ratliffe (1798-1857);³¹ Jesse S. Meador (1811-1891), a son of John Meador; Joseph E. Meador (1820-1908), another son of John Meador;³² and John B. Wisdom, who was likely a relative of Thomas Wisdom.

In 1850, the name of the Rockingham Circuit was changed to the Wentworth Circuit which included at least the following churches: Wentworth (1836); Lowe's (1796); Salem; Mount Carmel (about 1808); Bethlehem (1835); Penile (1838); Wesley Chapel (1825), the first Methodist Church organized on the north side of the Dan River in the county; Madison (1843); Leaksville (1837); Sharon (located north of present day Ruffin, 1818) and Union Church, (the forerunner of the Hickory Grove Church), (1849). So many churches on a circuit prevented preaching to be held on a regular basis. In fact, Reverend William W. Albea who served the Rockingham Circuit in 1841 and 1842 noted in his diary that he preached seventeen sermons at Salem during the year 1842.

PRE-CIVIL WAR SCHOOL AT SALEM CHURCH

Education in early North Carolina, as in other States, was closely associated with the church. At first, most of the teachers were clergymen, laymen, or candidates for the ministry and Salem was no exception. In 1841, Rockingham County was divided into school districts and the Salem Church area fell in District number II. This was the beginning of the county's first public schools or common schools as they were then known.³¹

Salem School was first known as the school "at Granger's Old Field." The school committee of District number 11 was composed of: Thomas Roach, Thomas G. Wisdom, and John Lindsey. In September 1842, 129 children were listed as living in District number 11. And when the school opened in October 1843, James Irvin and E.G. Browning were the first teachers. It stands to reason that there were either two schools in District number 11 or a two-teacher school at Salem Church. The September 1844 report listed teachers as E.G. Browning and N.F. Reid and that D. McCollum was paid to "do the house" for \$23.33. This appears to be when the log school at Salem was built. Before this time, school must have been held in the church.

It is known that Numa Fletcher Reid, an outstanding man of his day, taught school at Salem in 1844. While teaching there, he lived with "his esteemed uncle Francis James Meador, a man of deep



Rev. Numa Fletcher Reid, teacher at Salem School in 1844 and minister at Salem Church, (Wentworth Circuit), 1849-1851. Photograph courtesy of Michael Perdue.

piety." The following year he began an academy at Wentworth and answering the call to the ministry, he became pastor of the Rockingham Circuit in 1849. His father, Reverend James Reid, was pastor of the old Guilford Circuit in the 1820's, which included Salem Church."

The 1845 report listed 113 children between age 5 and 21 in District number 11 and that Philip Perkins taught 22 males and 17 females for two month eight days and was paid \$25.21. Also, that James H. Brent taught 22 males and 19 females for two months and three days and was paid \$32.27. In June 1848, the report listed judges to oversee election of school committeemen "at Salem Church." This was the first mention of Salem Church in school records. In July 1848, the judges elected were John Lindsey, Thomas G. Wisdom, and E.R. Harris. Tother committeemen for District number 11:

1853 - Thomas Roach, J. E. Meador, James Ratliffe

1855 - James Ratliffe, J. E. Meador, Robert W. Dallas

1858 - R. W. Dallas, William Lindsey, William A. Stokes

1862 - R. W. Dallas, William A. Stokes, Harvey Moore

1864 - Harvey Moore, Robert Shreve, C. G. Terry

Teachers who taught in District number 11 during this period (1846-1862):

1846 - J. A. Ratliffe and J. H. Brent

1848 - Thomas C. Moore and R. G. Alcorn

1853 - Thomas B. Swan and R. G. Alcorn

1854 - R. N. Lowe

1855 - J. S. Waters and Mary A. Waynick (First woman teacher at Salem)

1856 - Janett Knight and Mary A. Waynick

1857 - Mary A. Waynick and T. D. Hutcherson

1858 - A. M. Holderby and R. P. Jones

1859 - John C. King and R. P. Jones

1860 - R. P. Jones

1861 -

1862 - James M. Waynick and R. P. Jones. 38

THE DECLINE OF SALEM CHURCH

In 1861 the Wentworth Circuit was divided into two smaller circuits. The Wentworth Circuit continued to cover the churches in the eastern half of the county, including Salem, the churches in the western half of the county were placed in the newly created Madison Circuit. (19)

Salem Church remained an active congregation throughout the 1850's and 1860's despite the loss of membership during the Civil War. The Quarterly Conference of the Wentworth Circuit met at Salem on a number of occasions lasting for two days at a time usually on Saturdays and Sundays.⁴⁰

Following the war, Reidsville, being a point on the vital Piedmont Railroad connecting Danville and Greensboro, was growing into a fair size village. The Methodists in Reidsville worshipped at Salem Church which was two miles northwest of the village.

In 1868, Joh W. Lewis was appointed pastor of the Wentworth Circuit which was composed of at least: Salem, Wentworth, Bethlehem, Mount Carmel, Penile, and Lowe's. He became instrumental in starting the Methodist Church in Reidsville. But his appointment expired, the construction plans halted, and most of the Reidsville Methodists continued to worship at Salem. Reverend William C.



Rev. David R. Bruton, pastor of Salem Church (Wentworth Circuit) 1859-1861. Photograph courtesy of Frances R. Brown.

Norman, who was appointed in 1872, wrote: "It became apparent that the Methodists should have a plant in town that our church might, in due time, take its place among the other denominations in the growth of the young city." Some eighteen people are believed to have met in 1872 in the home of William Lindsey on Main Street and organized the Reidsville Methodist Church.

It was believed advisable to move the membership of Salem Church to Reidsville. And finally, on a Sunday afternoon in 1874 after the regular monthly service at the Baptist Church in Reidsville (where they were then meeting), Reverend W. C. Norman enrolled the names of all present who wished to connect themselves with the Reidsville Church. Many former members of Salem were among the charter members at Reidsville, they were: William Burton, W. S. Allen, Thomas D. Carroll, Bedford A. Crafton, Samuel J. Meador, Mrs. Samuel J. Meador, Mrs. Catherine E. Meador, Ann C. Meador, Mrs. Sarah Lindsey, Mrs. Lucy Barnes, Mrs. J. H. Benson, John Irvin, Mrs. John Irvin, and James Robinson. 43

It is understandable that the small group left at Salem lost interest and was discouraged when a number of their congregation had moved their membership to Reidsville or had gone elsewhere to worship. So by the mid 1870's, Salem was written off as a preaching point on the Wentworth Circuit. Those who chose not to unite with the Reidsville Methodist moved their membership either to Wentworth or to other nearby churches. 44

In 1885 with Salem no longer existing as a church, the trustees in charge of the church property: William Burton, Thomas D. Carroll, and R. P. Jones sold to George W. Johnson the old Salem Church lot of four acres for \$117.00. 45

Therefore, from the mid 1870's through the 1880's, Salem Church was not listed as a preaching point and was for all purposes dead.

POST-WAR SCHOOL AT SALEM

Salem School probably remained in operation during the 1860's and 1870's, but the surviving records give little information on individual schools.

The first detailed school records after the Civil War began in 1877 at which time a new school committee was appointed for District number 11 which centered around the schoolhouse at Salem Church. The committee was composed of George Johnson, John King, and R. G. Gladston. Later T. P. Burton replaced Gladston

on the committee. The student census for District number 11 as of September 1, 1877, listed 30 white males and 29 females which by the following year increased to a total of 82 white to about 47 black children (whose school location is unknown). 46

In the report for 1880 by James W. Reid, there were 129 white children and 42 black children listed in District number 11. The District was allowed \$1.00 for each student within its bounds. The school comittee members for "District number 11, School House at Old Salem" were George Johnson, John King, and W.M. Harrison. ⁴⁷ In 1881, a new committee was appointed. It included C.W. Mobley, W.M. Harrison, and D.M. Moore. ⁴⁸

Among the teachers who taught in District number 11 in the 1870's and 1880's were the following:

1878 - W. C. Stewart, John M. Holderby

1879 - W. T. Barber, James A. Patterson

1880 - Anne C. Meador (daughter of Francis James Meador)

1881 - R. S. Powell, W. T. Barber

1883 - R. N. Howard. 49



Ann C. Meador, teacher at Salem School in 1880. Photograph courtesy of Frances R. Brown.

The school at Old Salem was in use until early 1880's. The school committee of March 27, 1882, composed of C. W. Mobley, W. M.

Harrison, and D. M. Moore purchased one acre of land from Harvey Moore "at the old Gooseberry School House place" for \$5.00.⁵⁰ Since there is no other known record of Gooseberry School, it, evidently, must have been an early private school. Salem School was then closed and the pupils went to the newly constructed school. Within a few years this new school (at old Gooseberry) was closed and the school at Salem reopened, probably around 1891.⁵¹

Bettie Sue Jones Gardner (1882-1965), who lived for several years, as a child, near Salem Church and school later wrote of her experiences in the year 1890-91:

I have a very distinct recollection of the church, a very old looking building. I also remember distinctly the Big Meeting in the summer when they spread cloths on the ground and placed the food on them. As it was the first time I had ever seen this done, it made an indelible impression. My mother would go over during the dinner hour and see and talk with old friends. I would go with her. She would go to the log school house just northwest of the church where the mothers would go to nurse and attend to their babies. I remember the school house better than the church because we were allowed in this. A negro girl, about my age and daughter of Uncle Will's tenant, would go with me to hunt chinquapins. The woods all around the church were filled with those bushes. We would take them in the school house and beat the nuts out on the big rock hearth. I also remember lots of men going into the school house. I had no idea for what purpose if I ever thought about it. My uncle went. In later years I learned that they were members of the Farmer's Alliance. They had not gotten into politics then. 52

A NEW DAY DAWNS FOR SALEM CHURCH

The Methodist Circuit structure in the eastern half of the county had undergone many changes by 1891. In 1881, the old Wentworth Circuit was abandoned out of which arose two smaller circuits, the Reidsville and the Ruffin Circuits. In 1885, the Reidsville Church pulled out of the Reidsville Circuit and most of the remaining churches were placed on the Ruffin Circuit composed of: Ruffin, Pelham, Mount Carmel, Bethlehem, Lowe's and Penile. Wentworth joined the Ruffin Circuit in 1887 after a two-year period on the Madison Circuit.⁵³

In 1891, during the pastorate of the Reverend N. R. Richardson, who was appointed to the Ruffin Circuit in 1890, Salem Church was reorganized and interest was renewed among the small membership

and in the community, in general. By May 1891, the old weather beaten frame church was repaired, "... the rotten timbers replaced, the old slatted benches tightened up and is to again do service as a house of worship." ⁵¹



The present Salem Church sanctuary, constructed 1891-1892, prior to the renovations of the early 1950's. Photo dated about 1948. Photograph courtesy of Robert W. Carter, Jr.

Shortly thereafter, the newly appointed trustees: Samuel J. Meador, Thomas D. Carroll, George J. Meador, J.H. Shefield, and W.G. Terry purchased one acre of the Salem Church lot including the cemetery back from George W. Johnson for \$50.00. This transaction did not include the Salem school house which the county school board purchased in 1896. 55

By late 1891, Salem had become an active church again and soon plans were made to replace the old antebellum sanctuary. The new and present sanctuary was built near the old structure during late 1891 and 1892. The timber used in the construction of the new church was given by David Johnson and George J. Meador. Reverend N.R. Richardson wrote the Raleigh Christian Advocate in the issue dated March 23, 1892:

We occupied the new church at Salem for the first time last Sunday...When plastered, painted, and permanently seated it will be one of the prettiest country churches in the county.⁵⁸

When the new church was completed, the dedication was set. In the local paper, Webster's Weekly, dated May 3, 1892, it stated that "The (Salem) church was not dedicated on the date announced a few weeks ago, owing to the fact that the plastering had not been completed. The house will be dedicated next Sunday at three o'clock." It seems that further delays caused the dedication to be re-scheduled to September 25, 1892. At this time, Dr. John R. Brooks, the Presiding Elder of the Greensboro District, dedicated the new sanctuary during the quarterly meeting of the Ruffin Circuit. The October 5, 1892, issue of the Christian Advocate described the event and the new church:

The building is large, attractive and comfortable and is well furnished. It costs upwards of twelve hundred dollars, a small part of which remained unpaid when it was finished but a collection that was taken before the dedication service liquidated the debt.⁶⁰

The new sanctuary was entered from the outside by double doors into a large vestibule to the right of which was a flight of enclosed stairs leading up to a large room. From the vestibule, the sanctuary was entered by separate doors and two aisles. There were three sections of pews with adequate room within the middle section for a large wood stove. The floor was completely bare at first, but later the two isles and the area in front of the pulpit were carpeted. Directly behind the pulpit was a slightly curved wall that projected out from the rear of the pulpit. This wall accommodated two floor-to-ceiling panels of colorful stained glass windows. Ample light and ventilation for the Sanctuary was provided by six tall windows, three on the east and west sides, respectively.

In 1890 the Western North Carolina Conference was formed out of the North Carolina Conference (Rockingham County was the northeast corner of the new conference). When Salem was revived in 1891, it was placed on the Ruffin Circuit then composed of Ruffin, Lowe's, Penile, Pelham and Mount Carmel. In 1893 the Salem Church was moved to the Wentworth Circuit (recreated in 1891) and became sister church to Wentworth, Bethlehem and Mount Carmel (moved to this circuit in 1892). The Reverend William F. Womble served the Salem Church when it first joined the Wentworth Circuit in 1893 and continued to serve there until the end of 1895. 622

SALEM SCHOOL REVIVED

With the revival of Salem Church in 1891, it appeared that the old log school house was again made ready for use as well.

From the Reidsville Review, dated October 8, 1895, the readers of that day saw the following: "Miss Berta Ratliffe will teach at Old Salem this term." This she did for, in later years she described the school at Salem:

My first little school was at Old Salem, two miles from Reidsville in a log cabin, just behind the Salem Methodist Church. The benches were made of split logs and had no backs. The room was heated by an immense open fireplace, and the desk was a long, polished board that extended across the back of the room, under the main window. The children's classes ranged all the way from the first to the seventh grades. This school lasted four months.⁶³



Conjectural sketch of the last Salem School which was closed in 1923. Sketch by Ann O. Rich.

About the turn of the century a new school house was constructed at Salem to take the place of the log-bodied one built ca. 1844. This was a one large room frame structure which could be expanded by the means of folding doors into two rooms. Upon entering, there was a place to hang coats and hats and a shelf for the lunch pails. Nearby sat the water bucket and dipper.

Early twentieth century teachers at Salem were Agnes Wariner, and Ruby Carroll, who taught at this school in 1910 and Essie Lasley in 1912. ⁶⁴ A few years later Margaret Brown experienced her first year of teaching there. She recalled:

I walked two and one-half miles through woods and over streams from my parents' home in the fall of 1918 to teach at Salem. I had about twelve pupils ranging from the first grade to the seventh. There was no slate blackboard but a black oilcloth type was used. Each desk seated two. The large boys cut the firewood for the pot-bellied stove and brought it in. Each day fresh water was brought up from a nearby spring and sometimes from Robert P. Talley's well across the road. Everyone drank from the same dipper. There were no window shades, dictionaries, or Bible in the classroom. We had a box supper, popular in those days as a means of raising money for needed supplies, dictionaries, etc. We swept the room after school each day. My pay was \$35.00 a month for five months. I taught at Salem for one year, leaving for a better position in Leaksville (now Eden) for nearly twice the monthly check and only one grade to teach. The school house key was turned back to Mr. Charlie Stokes, Chairman of the Board.65

In conversations with Eloise Talley Rudd, she remembers well her early years at Salem School. The teachers she had there were Ruth Clark, Sallie Bennett, Dora DeShazo, Mollie Alcorn, Annie Roberts and Gladys Davis. Miss Davis was the last teacher before the final closing of the Salem School in the spring of 1923. 66

From the minutes of the Rockingham County Board of Education meeting dated October 1, 1923:

Upon motion it was ordered that the trustees of Salem Methodist Church be authorized to sell the old public school building and after confirmation to the Board that the proceeds be turned over to the County Treasurer and the land upon which this building is located having been deeded by the owner to the trustees according to law. ⁶⁷

From the minutes dated December 3, 1923:

Upon motion it was ordered that the sale of Salem School Building be approved and that the money be turned over to the County Treasurer. The building was sold at public auction for \$58.00 and land having been deeded to the trustees of the church. 68

School consolidation and the sociological shift in the Salem Community had sounded the death knell of the Salem school.

WENTWORTH CIRCUIT PARSONAGE

The Wentworth Circuit owned a parsonage in Reidsville for almost thirty years before the name was changed to Reidsville Circuit in 1932. There is a deed of record, dated January 1, 1901, in consideration of \$200.00, from:

William Lindsey and wife Eugenia N. Lindsey, Edna Lindsey Watt and husband E.D. Watt, and Richard Lindsey Ellington to W.T. Williams, W.N. Gunn, John N. Moore, J.H. Thomas, B.C. Smith, W.R. French, George J. Meador, T.P. Burton, and C.W. Mobley, Trustees of the Wentworth Circuit in the County of Rockingham, State of North Carolina, of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, a certain lot or parcel of land, situated in the town of Reidsville on the east side of Matlock (now North Scales Street), to be kept in trust as a place of residence for the use and occupancy of the preachers of the M. E. Church, South. 69



The Circuit Parsonage in Reidsville that was built in 1901, demolished in the early 1960's. Photograph courtesy of Rev. Joseph W. Lasley.

ROADS IN THE SALEM AREA

At the turn of the twentieth century, roads were narrow, winding, and unpaved; most of them deep rutted and rough.

It should be brought to mind that church services were sometimes cancelled because travel was difficult during the severe winter months. It was hard for the preacher, with several churches in different sections of the county to keep his appointments. Perhaps a few of his hardier members would attend, but it would probably be a month before his next appointment at the church, if the weather permitted that.

Dr. J. Elwood Carroll, who grew up in the Salem Church to become an influential minister in the Western North Carolina Conference wrote:

About 1910, the road from Wentworth to Reidsville by Salem Church was macadamized one vehicle width. As the cars came and with fast speeds of twenty to thirty miles per hour, they blew away the fine dust and gravel, leaving the larger rocks, which just about loosened one's teeth to ride over them especially on a steel tire wagon or buggy.

In 1922 the first modern concrete highway in the county was constructed between Reidsville, Wentworth and Leaksville. The highway was built on the old macadam road by Salem Church.

SUNDAY SCHOOL AT SALEM

During the summer, the worship service was preceded one hour by the Sunday School; but during the winter months Sunday School did not meet. The closing time was usually around Thanksgiving or Christmas to reopen about the first Sunday in April.

After the winter hibernation, Sunday School was reopened and was booming with classes in each corner of the sanctuary. The card class, so-called because the tots used a small picture card for their lesson material, met up toward the right front. The primary children were taught by Mrs. Joe C. Lasley at the front left ("amen" corner), and Mrs. Lester Stokes taught the Youth Class about midway towards the back on the west side (that is where Dr. Carroll recalls jumping out the window one Sunday following the benediction, "knocked the supporting window stick, no cords or weights then, and the window slammed down with a bang to awaken all sleepers and scared many about to death!"), Then the Senior Class of all adult

men and women met at the middle section of pews at the rear of the sanctuary. 71

For many years Dr. Carroll's mother, Mrs. William Abner Daniel Carroll (nee Margaret Elizabeth Jones), taught this Adult Class until the fall of 1915 when she was taken terminally ill. Dr. Carroll wrote:

As early as I can recall, my mother was teaching the class and always prepared her lesson while doing her churning with a dasher churn. I shall ever pleasantly recall her sitting in a little straight chair with her Bible and Sunday School quarterly in her lap, while she pumped the dasher up and down in the little pottery churn. Perhaps her teaching runs back to near or, maybe prior to my birth, 1904. I recall the walks to Salem Church from home, about a mile, and how she had to encourage me to keep up with her fast walk to reach the church on time. As to the quality of her teaching, I was too young to recall. She was likely a good teacher as she was a genuine Christian and came to teaching naturally as her father, Richard Perryman Jones, was a schoolteacher all his life, after being graduated from U.N. C. at Chapel Hill in 1843, until his death in 1900. After mother died in February 1916, her brother-in-law, James Wilson Carrell, taught that same Senior Class for a number of years. 72

Dr. Carroll has in his possession his mother's Bible inscribed, "Presented to Mrs. W. A. Carrell (sic) by the Senior Class, Salem S. S., December 28, 1911." He suspects his uncle, J. Wilson Carrell, wrote the above in the fly-leaf of this Bible as he always insisted on spelling the name, Carroll, with an "e" instead of an "o". 73

CHURCH MUSIC AT SALEM

Music was always a special and important part of church meetings or services even back in the days when there were no instruments such as a piano or organ to accompany the group.

There is a story that Mrs. Dave Johnson, who lived in the community and attended Salem Church, decided to bring her guitar to church one Sunday to accompany the singing. There was no complaint with her playing but members thought the guitar not a "fit" (proper) instrument to play in the house of the Lord. A so, thereafter, the hymns continued to be started by a leader called a "tune raiser" with the congregation joining in the singing.

In 1895, a pump organ was given to Salem Church by Mrs. George J. Meador. ⁷⁵ It is believed she was organist until about her death in 1909 when Mrs. Charles. A. Stokes, (MIss Pattie Will) took over.

THE SALEM METHODIST WOMEN

The Ladies Aid Society was organized in 1912 during the pastorate of the Reverend A. L. Aycock. The charter members were: Mrs. F. B. Jones, Mrs. H. A. Clark, Mrs. W. S. Somers, Mrs. J. C. Lasley, Mrs. L. V. Stokes and Mrs. R. W. Hutcherson. The purpose of this organization was to assist in the needs and the upkeep of the church and to help make the parsonage more home like for the pastor and his family. To maintain the parsonage and to finance other worthwhile Christian projects, these women travled by horse and buggy and sold milk, butter, homemade aprons, and crocheted items.

In his report at the Quarterly Conference, March 24, 1923, the pastor, Reverend C. P. Goode, reported that the Salem Aid Society had given \$50.00 for furnishings at the parsonage. On other occasions, the minutes of the Quarterly Conference referred to the fine work of this group; however, around 1925, it disbanded.⁷⁷

OCCASIONS DURING THE CHURCH YEAR

There were two occasions during these years that were very special to the young folk: Children's Day, usually held in June, and the Christmas celebration.

For Children's Day, there was group singing interspersed with individual recitations along with an abundance of wild flowers picked from the fields and hedges the day before. The altar rail was always entwined with a chain of daisies made from wild oxeye daisies.

Christmas was celebrated with a large cedar tree well decorated and with lighted candles. Though Sunday School was closed at that season, the Christmas entertainment featured some carols, recitations, and stories with at least two treats from the tree for each enrolled child in Sunday School, with some traditional fruits, nuts, and candies. This Christmas party was the only night service except, at times, there might have been a preaching held at night during the annual revival. 78

About the revivals or Big Meetings:

We (Salem Church) always had one about the time between laying by the crops and harvesting them. There was always a slight slack time between those two activities. We always had a visiting minister. The series services opened on Sunday with preaching in the norning and afternoon with "dinner on the grounds." On some occasions we would continue with two preaching services with "dinner on the grounds" through the remainder of the week but it is believed that the women were not too happy with that much cooking, so the schedule shifted to a morning sermon with the minister eating in the homes of the members, then a preaching service at night. I recall how often the minister came to our home for dinner, and how long they could eat and talk. The fried chicken got down pretty close to the necks, backs, feet and wings by the time we children had a turn at the second table.

Yes, the revival services always included an "alter call" for repentants and new members. It was at one of these services when I (Dr. Carroll) was nine years old, I made my decision to follow Christ and with a large group of about fifteen other young people received baptism and took the vow of church membership there at Salem.⁷⁹

THE REUNION OF 1915

On Sunday, November 21, 1915, while the Annual Conference was in session in Reidsville with the Reverend W. A. Lambeth, pastor of the Main Street Methodist Church as host, a special service was held at Salem Church. Reverend N. R. Richardson, pastor at Salem during 1891 and 1892, presided.

At three o'clock, Reverend Richardson occupied the pulpit and preached a fine sermon, selecting as his subject, "Unconscious Influence." Reverend A. J. Burrus delivered the opening prayer, and Reverend Seymour Taylor delivered the closing prayer. Reverend A. S. Raper delivered a very interesting and appropriate talk telling of both sad and happy experiences. Reverend E. J. Poe, who was instrumental in constructing the parsonage while on the Wentworth Circuit, and the Reverend A. L. Aycock, whose four years of faithful service was still recalled with appreciation, attended the service. Salem's first pastor after leaving the Ruffin Circuit was Reverend W. F. Womble, who attended this meeting and made appropriate remarks. "The music was the old Methodist kind and kept the crowd expectant and in fine form."

SALEM ENTERS THE MODERN AGE

Salem Church experienced encouraging and steady growth from

1891 when it was reopened for a golden age of about twenty-five years. Church membership increased, the Sunday School teemed with life-mostly children and youth, and the worship services filled the building to capacity.

About 1915 the effects of two great sociological changes in the Salem community started their deadly results. These two influences spelled the death of the Salem School. The effects were powerful upon Salem Church but not lethal. The two movements were independent of each other but common in effects; the migration of many large families to nearby towns and the development of Chinqua-Penn Plantation.

With the annual conference of 1915, W. Samuel Somers, son-inlaw of the James McDonalds, relinquished his position as superintendent of the Salem Sunday School and transferred his family to the Reidsville Main Street Church. The loss of the Somers family to Salem Church was great and at this same time, the Rev. Thomas C. Jordan, one of the most youthful and influential ministers of the circuit, was transferred to another pastorate. With these blows to Salem, still other influences were operative in the community.

In 1911, T. Jefferson Penn purchased the Popular Lake as a personal rural retreat. At first he built a club house near the present 4-H Camp on the lake, but on a rainy Saturday, March 16, 1912, the lake dam broke. Mr. Penn decided not to rebuild the dam, but instead to form a dairy herd and use the lake site to grow tall corn for his milk cows. He started expanding his land holding into a great plantation. The new workmen at the dairy and on the plantation were largely imported and did not hold Methodist views nor did their children attend the Salem public school. It is estimated that as many as ten families were uprooted by the Penn plantation development.*2

The congregation at Salem Church was struggling during the 1920's and 1930's. This fact became more obvious when Mr. and Mrs. Jefferson Penn built the Chinqua-Penn Mansion nearby. No doubt sensing the church's loss of vigor, Mr. Penn was said to have offered to purchase the Salem Church and grounds, absorb the property into his plantation, and turn the church building into a community club house. When the church officials apparently declined his offer, Mr. Penn, according to church members, erected a log storage building very close to their common property boundary. This act of construction, along with others, worsened the relationship between Mr. Penn and the Salem Church congregation. 83

In the years after Mr. Penn's death in 1946, Mrs. Penn made

certain amends with the congregation by selling to it a 1.26 acre lot located between the church and the main roads in 1952, thus making the church boundaries on two sides coincide with the highways.⁸⁴

A second great strain on the Salem membership was when the children of large Methodist families upon reaching adulthood, moved away to seek livelihood in more populous areas. After World War I, with some of Salem's membership returning from military service, there was no way to "keep them down on the farm." Among the larger families, in the 1910's and 1920's, who migrated were the Charles H. Stokes, the Dave Moores, the Walter McAlisters, the W. A. Carrolls, the T. P. Burtons, the Will Clarks, the David Johnsons, and the James McDonalds. Most of these were large families and the total involved amounted to nearly one hundred people-practically all lost to the Salem Church and community.⁸⁵

Little except personal knowledge is known about Salem Church durng the twenties and thirties as most records have been lost or destroyed that were related to these years. Despite the numerical loss, the leadership and a very dedicated nucleus of Salem Church remained loyal and progressive. Not even the Great Depression or World War II could destroy this beacon light. Improvements were made in the facilities and new innovative programs of activities were developed. Some of the local farms not acquired by the Penn expansion started to break up into residential building lots. New people came. New blood was infused into the old, loyal strain and new life was regained.

The pastors reported that throughout these years the Sunday School was well attended at Salem. The superintendents were H. P. Schoolfield (1916-1918), Joseph C. Lasley (1918-1927), Wilbur Stokes (1927-1929), Mrs. Charles A. Stokes (1929-1937), and Marcus Deal 1937-?). 86

The Quarterly Conference report of the Reidsville Circuit (prior to 1932, Wentworth Circuit) dated August 22, 1936, stated that Church had received a new tin roof. The Quarterly Conferences, at this point, were held usually on Saturday, often at Salem. The day included morning preaching with business, "dinner on the ground", and more preaching in the afternoon.⁸⁷

The Salem Trustees for 1937 are listed as Charles A. Stokes, Lester V. Stokes, Dr. J. R. Meador, J. Marvin Gibbs, and J. Wilson Carrell (sic).88

Salem kept one minister for eleven years, a rarity among Methodists who usually moved their minister every four years. He was Reverend Thomas V. Crouse (1930-1941). It was during his pastorate



Rev. Thomas V. Crouse, pastor of Salem Church 1930-1941. Photograph courtesy of Mr. & Mrs. T. F. Crouse.

that Eloise Talley Rudd became the first woman elected to the board of stewards.*9

Rural electrification came about in the 1930'2. It was at this time that the old oil lamps were taken down and the church wired for electricity. Also the purchase of two coal stoves were made to replace the two wood stoves that had provided heat in the sanctuary. 90

The first Vacation Bible School was started in the early 1940's under the guidance of Reverand John C. Swain (1943-1949). This summer function continues to be well attended.⁹¹

In October of 1945, Reverend Swaim also helped in reorganizing the Woman's Society of Christian Service. The charter members were: Mrs. C. A. Stokes, Mrs. Lester Stokes, Mrs. Ben Stedman, Mrs. Allen Y. Stokes, Mrs. Nathan Gardner, Mrs. L. A. Rudd, Mrs. Howard Knight, Mrs. Woodrow Wilson, Mrs. J. C. Lasley, and Mrs. J. C. Swaim, the pastor's wife. These women worked tirelessly on various projects such as redecorating the church and planting shrubbery. Money used in these projects was made mainly by serving suppers and selling stews.⁹²

By 1949, Salem's membership was down to 47 active members and at that time the smallest charge on the Reidsville Circuit with Reverend C.G. Isley (1949-1953) preaching at Salem the first and third Sundays. A Youth Fellowship organization and a Boy Scout Troop were active at this time.⁹³

The Sunday School, with Ben Stedman as superintendent, consisted of about 48 members and an average of 85% attendance each Sunday. There were only three classes: the Adult Class taught by Mrs. Charles A. Stokes in the back of the sanctuary. The large upstairs room (in earlier days used as a meeting place for the Farmer's Alliance group) had been partitioned off into two rooms for the Junior Class taught by Mrs. Ben Stedman and Laura Stokes, and the Beginner's Class taught by Mrs. L. A. Rudd.⁹¹

For about forty-five years, Mrs. Charles A. Stokes served as church organist. There are fond memories of "Miss Pattie Will" pumping away on the organ pedals; and as her nimble fingers played she, too, joined the congrational in singing the familiar and well-loved hymns. And often, in season, could be seen on the organ a bouquet of flowers or, perhaps, a single rose that she had picked from her garden.

This gentle unassuming lady, who had served her church so well and so faithfully over the years as Sunday School superintendent, teacher, and organist, passed away December 28, 1953. The old



Mrs. Charles A. Stokes, long time Sunday School teacher and church organist. Photograph courtesy of John Allen McDonald.

organ was put aside.95 Later an electric organ was installed.

In 1963, chimes were installed in the church steeple. Familiar hymns still fill the air around Salem Church.⁹⁶

The music program expanded during the following years to include the first vested choir in the 1960's, which served for a number of years.⁹⁷ A second vested choir was organized in 1980.⁹⁸ Today this choir, with less than twelve members continues to be an integral part of the Sunday Services.⁹⁹

SALEM EXPANDS ITS FACILTIES

At a meeting of the Quarterly Conference of the Reidsville Circuit in December 1952, plans were approved for building a new educational addition to the church and to add a porch and steeple to the front. The work began in late spring of 1953 under the leadership of the pastor, the Reverend C. G. Isley, who served from 1949-1953. Unfortunately, Reverend Isley did not live to see the completion of the work to which he gave so lmuch time and effort. The work was slow, on a pay-as-you-build policy; but by the end of 1955, this renovation had been completed under the new pastor, the Reverend Joseph W. Lasley, at a total cost of about \$25,000.

The new educational addition adjoining the sanctuary consisted of six classrooms, a basement fellowship hall and kitchen, and two rest rooms. Also, an automatic heating system and a water system were installed. 100



Salem Church in 1955 at the completion of the educational wing and other exterior improvements. Photograph courtesy of Rev. Joseph W. Lasley.

The dedication service for this new addition was held on the "annual Homecoming Day" on the first Sunday in June 1956. The Speaker at the eleven o'clock service was Dr. J. Elwood Carroll, at the time pastor of the First Methodist Church in Hickory, North Carolina. It was a fitting tribute to pay the early stalwarts of Salem Church to ask one of their descendants to deliver the sermon on the day of rededication. Following "dinner on the ground," the dedica-

tion service was conducted at two-thirty o'clock that afternoon by Dr. Eugene C. Few, Superintendent of the Greensboro District of the Methodist Church, assisted by the church pastor, the Reverend Joseph W. Lasley.

This dedication was especially meanful to the sixty church members who had hoped, and prayed and worked unceasingly during this period of three years. Special mention should be made to the devoted service of the women in this undertaking, especially that of Mrs Audrey Talley Wilson, who served as treasurer throughout the whole project and acted as chairman a great part of the time. Many gifts, both large and small, were received and greatly appreciated to make this building project possible. The Duke Endowment, the Conference Board of Missions, and Church Extension each made contributions. ¹⁰¹

The Reverend C. G. Isley (1949-1953) was appointed to serve the five churches in the Reidsville Circuit: Salem, Wentworth, Bethlehem, Mount Carmel, and Lowe's. Reverend J. W. Lasley followed in 1953 and Reverend James G. Allred in 1956. But with Mount Carmel becoming a station church with its own parsonage in 1956, and Lowe's a station church in 1963 with its own parsonage in the community, the circuit was left with Salem, Wentworth, and Bethlehem. These three churches then built a parsonage near Salem Church. The land on which the parsonage was built was given by R. Wilbur Stokes, Allen Y. Stokes, and Alice M. STokes. The first pastor to occupy this new parsonage was Reverend Edmund L. Lynn (1963-1967). 102

Since 1963, the pastors have had only three churches to serve each Sunday. The schedule of morning services became as follows: Wentworth, with church service each Sunday at nine o'clock, Salem at ten o'clock, and Bethlehem at eleven o'clock, with Salem and Bethlehem alternating time schedules each year.

In September 1967, the Reverend Lowell Swisher announced the formation of the Methodist Men's organization with fifteen members from the Reidsville Circuit. 103

In 1968, the Methodist Church united its white and black Annual Conferences and united also with the Evangelical United Brethren Church to become the United Methodist Church.¹⁰⁴

RENOVATION OF THE SANCTUARY

Desiring to more inviting and more comfortable sanctuary in

which to worship, the members began planning and working in earnest toward that goal. The Reverend Guy Godfrey was pastor in 1973 when the renovation of the sanctuary took place: a double door and a center aisle replaced the old two door—two aisle arrangement heretofore; the two panels of stained glass windows (built in the wall behind the pulpit in 1891 when the church was constructed) were removed, sold, and later lost, much to the distress of those who remembered their beauty and uniqueness. A red carpet, a communion rail, and new pews were installed; two lovely chandeliers and eight matching wall sconces replaced the old light fixtures; the six tall windows were fitted with a series of indoor blinds painted to match the decor of the sanctuary. Air conditioning was added.

In the renovation plans, the large vestibule area was put to better use by making the vestibule smaller thus allowing space for the formation of a reception room on the left and a coat-storage room on the right.

Many donations and gifts of furnishings were received from members and friends of the church. 105

In the late 1970's and early 1980's, attention turned toward ground work and cemetery improvements. This interest and concern was encouraged chiefly by Otho T. Mundy. Also on this committee was Odell Smith, chairman, who for years has maintained the church grounds in excellent condition. This project consisted of: the eradication of undergrowth, which was encroaching from the Chinqua-Penn Farm area; the building of a ramp to the church porch; removal of dead trees in the cemetery area and the laying of a cemetery walkway. A cemetery fund was also established to provide proper maintenance and perpetual care. 106

In 1982, the congregation voted to make additional improvements to the church exterior by the application of vinyl siding, including insulation. 107

A need for evangelism in the Salem Church became apparent in the 1980's and under the leadership of H. P. (Skeezix) Brown, II, two spring revivals were held in May of 1984 and 1985. These services added to the fervor of the church and encouraged community cooperation. Salem Church has been blessed with the services of its own lay leaders.

Records show that the women of the church have played a large part in the work of the church. Today the United Methodist Women continue that tradition at Salem. An event of note takes place each Septemer with a Labaor Day dinner served in the Fellowship Hall. This popular event garners much support for the Cemetery Fund. 1099

Salem United Methodist Church is a small rural church. It stands proud and stately in a pretty setting of trees within the forks of the road "below Granger's Old Field" one mile northwest of Reidsville.

The first Sunday in June is Annual Homecoming Day. After the sermon and "dinner on the ground," the descendants of the John Meador Clan hold their annual reunion of fellowship in the church sanctuary led by Dr. J. Elwood Carroll.

Salem's small congregation is to be admired and commended for its many accomplishments. It has progressed forward in spite of adversity with courage, spiritual strength and determination, similar in a way, to the struggles which confronted its pioneers who settled the Wolf Island Creek area and established a place of worship in 1799.

It is encouraging to observe that in recent years some new families in the community are becoming involved in the activities of the church and are contributing fresh interest and dedication in Salem Church as it strives to make its programs more meaningful to young and old alike.

Salem United Methodist Church continues to be a place of worship and "to preach and expound God's Word therein." May it be so forever!

NOTES

¹Hugh Talmage Lefler and Albert Ray Newsome, *The History of a Southern State, NorthCarolina*, 3rd ed. (Chapel Hill, N.C.: The University of North Carolina Press, 1973), pp. 84-85. Hereinafter cited as Lefler and Newsome.

²Lefler and Newsome, pp. 89-91.

³Lefler and Newsome, pp. 264-265.

¹Lefler and Newsome, p. 419.

⁵Lefler and Newsome, pp. 141-142, 265.

⁶Letter to Peggy Osborne, Eden, N.C., from John J. Creighton, Chester, Pa., dated August 28, 1979, stating that the following settlers from Dorchester County, Maryland, settled in Rockingham County: Thomas Thompson, James Busick, Levin Woollen, William Heather. Others from Maryland included: the Jones, Deans, and Moores. Information supplied by Robert W. Carter, Jr. See: The Heritage of Rockingham County. North Carolina. 1983, Hunter Publishing Company, Winston-Salem, N.C., p. 450, for story of the Newnams.

 $^{{\}rm ^7See}$ Note number ${\rm ^6}$ and Edward A. Woolen, Woollen-Woolen: Family Genealogy, Richmond, Va. 1984.

⁸Grady L. E. Carroll, Francis Asbury in North Carolina, pp. 76, 82, 89, 105, 131, 164. Also The Heritage of Rockingham County, North Carolina, p. 45.

⁹Reverend Meacham's journal is in the Manuscript Department of Perkins Library of Duke University.

¹⁰Rockingham County Deed Books: D, 271; F, 181; G, 63: Register of Deeds, Wentworth, N.C.

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¹¹Smith's is listed in the Quarterly Conference records 1833-1834 but is not listed in 1835 or 1836. See Guilford Circuit Conference Record in the manuscript Department of Perkins Library, Duke University.

¹²Rockingham County Deed Book, F, 181.

¹³Ibid. Deed research by Robert W. Carter, Jr.

¹⁴Woollen-Woolen: Family Genealogy, Richmond, Va. 1984.

¹⁵History of Missouri (Chicago, Good-Speed Publishing Co., 1889), pp. 1028-1029.

16 Rockingham County Deed Book, D, 249.

¹⁷Rockingham County Wills Book, A. 72. Information supplied by Robert W. Carter, Jr.

¹⁸⁶ List of Pastors, Statistics, District, and Circuit Changes for Methodist Episcopal Church, South in the Wentworth area 1784-1939," prepared by Michael Perdue of the Wentworth Church, 1985, (unpublished). Information was compiled basically from Conference minutes and local church records. Hereinafter cited as Perdue, "M.E. Churches 1784-1939,"

¹⁹Mary Meador Wolfe, "History of the Meador Line of John and Nancy Flippen Meador and Their Descendants," unpublished typescript, pp. 5-7. Hereinafter cited as Wolfe, "Meador Line."

 $^{20}\mbox{The house}$ is the property of Charles W. Meeks located about one mile east of Salem.

²¹Guilford Circuit Quarterly Conference Record, Manuscript Department, Perkins Library, Duke University.

²²Perdue, "M. E. Churches 1784-1939."

²³Rockingham County Deed Book, 2d F, 225.

²⁴Rockingham County Deed Book, 2d A, 225.

²⁵Wolfe, "Meador Line," pp. 6-7, and Wolfe, Descendants of John and Nancy Flippen Meador," unpublished typescript, p. 11.

²⁶Rockingham County Marriage Bond Book, Register of Deeds, Wentworth. Waters sold the land for Bethlehem Church's first building in 1835. He is buried in the Edwards Family Cemetery near Mount Carmel Church.

²⁷The Heritage of Rockingham County, North Carolina, pp. 418-419.

²⁸Elmer T. Clark, Methodism in Western North Carolina, pp. 73-74.

²⁹Rockingham County Deed Book, 2d P, 335.

Minformation supplied by Robert W. Carter, Jr., Reidsville, N.C.: John Gunn married Elizabeth Palmer and lived about two miles northeast of Salem on the north prong of Wolf Island Creek. In the early 1850's, he moved northwest of Wentworth where he built a large house which later became known as the Pannill Home.

31 The Heritage of Rockingham County, North Carolina, p. 511.

³²See Note ²⁵.

³³Perdue, "M. E. Churches 1784-1939." Albea's diary is in the Manuscript Department, Perkins Library, Duke University.

³¹Rockingham County Minutes of the Common Schools 1841-1876, State Archives, Raleigh, N.C. School research by Robert W. Carter, Jr.

35 Ibid.

³⁶ James W. and Frank L. Reid, ed.: Life. Sermons and Speeches of Reverend Numa F. Reid. Late of the North Carolina Methodist Conference, (New York, E. J. Hale and Son Publishers, 1874), p. 32.

³⁷See Note ³⁴. Catherine W. Edwards, wife of Francis James Meador, and Martha Edwards, wife of James Reid, were sisters and were the daughters of Rev. and Mrs. George R. Edwards of the Mount Carmel Church area.

The Journal of Rockingham County History and Genealogy

38 Ibid.

³⁹Perdue, "M. E. Churches 1784-1939."

¹⁰Conversation with Michael Perdue of the Wentworth Church, August 1985. Raleigh Christian Advocate, January 16, 1864, and January 10, 1865.

11 Ibid.

¹²Webster's Weekly, June 21, 1894

Webster's Weekly, June 21, 1894.

"Conversation with Michael Perdue, August 1985.

¹⁵Rockingham County Deed Book, 4d B, 188.

¹⁶Rockingham County Board of Education Minute Books 1877-1885, Rockingham County Agricultural and Educational Building, Wentworth, N.C.

¹⁷Copy of 1880 School Report owned by Mrs. Garland Crumpton, Reidsville, N.C.

18 See Note 16.

¹⁹Ibid.

⁵⁰Rockingham County Deed Book, 3d T, 313.

⁵¹Rockingham County Deed Book 228, p. 297. School and deed research by Robert W. Carter, Jr.

 52 Recollections of Bettie Sue Jones Gardner, unpublished typescript, in which she recalls her early days at Salem. A copy of the recollections is in the possession of the writer.

⁵³Perdue, "M. E. Churches 1784-1939."

⁵⁴Raleigh Christian Advocate, June 10, 1891, and Reidsville Review, May 13, 1891.

⁵⁵Rockingham County Deed Book, 88, p. 10.

⁵⁶Raleigh Christian Advocate, June 10, 1891, March 23, 1892.

57 Gift of timber was recorded in the Gift Book kept in the reception room at Salem Church.

⁵⁸Raleigh Christian Advocate, March 23, 1892.

⁵⁹Webster's Weekly, May 3, 1892.

⁶⁰Raleigh Christian Advocate, October 2, 1892. In the fly-leaf of a well-worn pulpit Bible, (now in the Reception Room of Salem Church) are the following words: Presented to Salem M. E. Church, South, By Rev. W. R. Ware, August 13, 1892." Reverend Ware was pastor of Main Street Methodist Church at Reidsville, the daughter church of Salem.

⁶¹Personal recollections and conversations with Eloise Talley Rudd, August 1985.

⁶²Perdue, "M. E. Churches 1784-1939."

⁶³Albert Ratliffe Craig, ed. by Marjorie Craig, "Home Life in Rockingham County in the Eighties and Nineties," The North Carolina Historical Review, XXXIII (October 1956), p. 525.

⁶¹Conversation with Reverend J. Elwood Carroll of Greensboro, N.C., March 1986.

65 Oral and written verification given by Margaret Brown Bailey, High Point, N.C.

⁶⁶Conversation with Eloise Talley Rudd, August 1985.

⁶⁷Minutes of the Rockingham County Board of Education, October 1, 1923.

⁶⁸Minutes of December 3, 1923.

⁶⁹Rockingham County Deed Book, 132, p. 124.

⁷⁰Letter - Dr. J. Elwood Carroll to Frances R. Brown, August 17, 1985.

71 Ibid.

⁷²Ibid.

73 Ibid.

⁷⁴Personal recollection as told by the writer's mother, Janie Meador Brown.

The History of Salem United Methodist Church

⁷⁵Salem Church Gift Book.

⁷⁶Information accredited to Mrs. Lester V. Stokes, deceased.

⁷⁷.. Abstracts of the Minutes for the Quarterly Conferences of the Wentworth (later Reidsville) Circuit" prepared by Bettie Sue Gardner, a copy of which is in the Special Collections Room of Rockingham Community College.

78 See Note 70.

79 Ibid.

80 The Reidsville Review, November 26, 1915.

⁸¹Information supplied by Dr. J. Elwood Carroll of Greensboro, N. C., October 7,

82 See Note 70.

⁸³Conversation with Eloise Talley Rudd, Fall 1985 and letter to Frances R. Brown from Dr. J. Elwood Carroll, October 7, 1986.

81 Rockingham County Deed Book, 429, p. 96.

83 See Note 83. The David Johnsons were not members at Salem; however, they attended and supported the church regularly.

⁸⁶Conversation with Michael Perdue and Eloise Talley Rudd, Fall 1985, and Note 81.

84 See Note 83 and Note 77.

88 See Note 77.

89 Conversation with Eloise Talley Rudd, Fall 1985.

90 Ibid.

91 Ibid.

92 Bettie Sue Gardner, "Salem Church," p. 8.

93 Conversation with Eloise Talley Rudd, August 1985.

⁹⁴Conversation with Eloise Talley Rudd, Winter 1985.

⁹⁵ Personal recollection of Mrs. Stokes, The old organ, given to the church in 1895 by Mrs. George J. Meador, was relegated to an upstairs room for 33 years. On realizing that the organ was a valuable piece of church history, the writer, Frances R. Brown, a great-niece of the donor, had this relic restored and refinished in May 1986. It is now in the sanctuary to be used for special occasions.

The chimes were given to the church by William C. Stokes of the Main Street United Methodist Church.

⁹⁷ Harry Cain, director.

98 Helen Hager, the able director, and wife of Reverend Parker Hager (1979-1985).

⁹⁹Shirley B. Angel, organist, pianist, and choir director.

100 Gardner, "Salem Church," p. 9, and Program for the Dedication Service, June 3, 1956.

102 Conversation with Michael Perdue, August 1985, and Rockingham County Deed, Book 598, p. 696.

10.3 Minutes of the Salem Women's Society for Christian Service (Methodist Women) Ocober 1967.

104 Personal recollections.

105 Conversation with Eloise Talley Rudd, Winter 1985, and personal recollections.

¹⁰⁶Conversation with Odell Smith, June 1986. Others on the grounds improvement committee were: H. P. (Skeezix) Brown, H; W. F. (Blue) Angel, Jr.; Aubrey Marsh; and William Stokes.

107 Conversation with church treasurer, Shirley B. Angel, July 1986.

108 Personal recollections. Lay leaders of recent years have been: Howard Marsh, W. F. (Blue) Angel, Jr., Odell Smith, and H. P. (Skeezix) Brown, H.

¹⁰⁹As of 1986, twelve active members of this worthwhile organization are: Dorothy Brown, President, Brenda Brown, Clara Brown, Daisy T. Brown, Ann Dalton, Dora Lee Marsh, Maudie Marsh, Annie L. Mundy, Lillie Murrell, Eloise T. Rudd, Joanne Stokes, and Helen B. Tuggle.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Writing a history is a joint affair that involves many individuals. My sincere thanks go in full measure to all who contributed.

I am deeply indebted to Robert W. (Bob) Carter, Jr., and Michael Perdue, two knowledgeable historians of the county who gave freely of their time and expertise, and shared with me their important materials collected over the years from various sources.

Grateful acknowledgements is made for the help provided by Eloise Talley Rudd who gave first-hand information recalling her fifty-five years as an active member of Salem Church and twentyfive years as a Sunday School teacher.

Deep appreciation and thanks are extended to Dr. J. Elwood Carroll, who willingly shared personal recollections of his early boyhood days in the church and community. Dr. Carroll also read the manuscript and made suggestions that I appreciate.

Special recognition is extended to William C. Stokes who during his lifetime greatly aided the efforts of Salem Church and with the writing of this history just prior to his death in September 1986.

Appreciation is given to Barbara Carter who typed the manuscript in her usual efficient manner.

Even though I had always felt a special relationship with Salem Church, little did I realize the extent of pleasure I would receive when I accepted the responsibility of writing its history and that of Salem School. To have served in this capacity, I am very appreciative.

Frances R. Brown

MINISTERS OF SALEM METHODIST CHURCH 1799-1986

Compiled by Michael Perdue

Year Appointed	Minister
1799	Robert Wilkerson, George McKenny
1800	William Atwood, Jesse Cole
1801	Josiah Philips
1802	John Moore
1803	Thomas L. Douglass, John C. Ballew
1804	William Hubbard, George Dillard
1805	John Cox, Nathan Weedon
1806	John Gibbons, Richardson Owen
1807	William Barnes, Charles Roundtree
1808	Thomas J. Crockwell
1809	Charles Roundtree, John Humphries
1810	Joel Arrington
1811	Edward Connon, Erasmus Stimson
1812	Ethelbert Drake
1813	John Doyle
1814	Cyrus Christian
1815	Henery Robertson, Charles Mosely
1816	James Hanner, Abraham Trail
1817	James Smith
1818	John F. Wright, Archibald Robinson
1819	Samuel Hunter
1820	Thomas Howard
1821	James Reid
1823	Thacker Muire
1824	Jesse Lee
1825	Rufus Wiley
1826	Jacob Hill
1827	Rufus Wiley, Thomas Mann
1828	William N. Abington
1829	Richard D. Merriweather, Joshua Jolliff
1830	Peter Doub
1831	John H. Watson
1832	Joshua Bethel
1834	James Morrison
1835	J. Leigh, T.M. Sharp

Year Appointed Minister

1836	David B. Nicholson
1838	William Anderson
1839	G. Brown
1840	William W. Turner
1840	William W. Turner (appointed in January)
1841	William Warren Albea (appointed in December)
1842	John Rich
1843	James D. Lumsden
1844	William Closs
1845	Philmer W. Archer, Thomas S. Cassodey
1846	Jeremiah Johnson (William Anderson - supply
	for 1847)
1848	William Anderson
1849	Numa Fletcher Reid
1851	David W. Doub (William Anderson - supply for
	1853)
1853	Joshua Bethel (William Anderson - supply for
	1854)
1855	Issac W. Avent
1856	Benjamin M. Williams
1857	Alfred Norman
1859	David R. Bruton
1861	Clarendon M. Pepper
1863	William Calvin Gannon
1864	Marcus C. Thomas
1866	William C. Gannon
1867	Robert Graham Barrett
1868	John W. Lewis
1872	William Capers Norman
	Salem Church closed from about 1874 until 1891
1891	N.R. Richardson
1892	L.M. Brower
1893	William Fletcher Womble
1895	John McCollum Price
1899	Edward Jasper Poe
1900	W. Legette
1901	Albert Sidney Raper
1905	Seymour Taylor
1908	A.L. Ayeock

Year Appointed	Minister
1912	A.J. Burrus
1914	Thomas C. Jordan
1916	Franklin LaFayette Townsend
1919	Charles Fletcher Sherrill
1921	Charles Plato Goode
1925	John Thomas Ratledge
1928	W. Reid Harris
1930	T.V. Crouse
1941	Byron Shankle
1943	John Curtis Swaim
1949	Claris Gordon Isley
1953	Joseph W. Lasley
1956	James G. Allred
1959	John P. Kincaid
1963	Edmund L. Lynn
1967	Lowell Swisher
1969	Charles L. Adams
1971	Edward L. Moore
1972	William Harris
1973	Guy Godfrey
1977	James McArn
1979	Parker H. Hager
1985	N. Ashley Randall, Jr.

SALEM UNITED METHODIST CHURCH CEMETERY

Recorded and compiled by Frances R. Brown, Summer 1986.

	NAME	DEATH DATE	REMARKS
--	------	------------	---------

BRAME

David Anthony b. 7/22/1981; Stillborn - We

can go to him but he can't

come to us.

BRANCH

Leonard M. 1927 b. 1900

Wm. H. 2/3/1942 b. 11/17/1941

BRANSCOME

Almer Moore 12/26/1978 b. 12/26/1897; In loving Me-

mory

BROWN

Henry P. 9/27/1951 b. 12/5/1869

Irene Hunt 6/11/1910 b. 10/5/1907; Suffer little child-

ren and come unto me.

Janie Meador 10/27/1977 b. 12/31/1874

BURTON

Jeff G. 6/30/1918 b. 9/7/1886; Someday we'll

understand.

John Allen 2/28/1949 b. 8/1/1878

Mary Frances

Terry 11/1/1935 b. 7/28/1857; She hath done

what she could.

Corp. P. Holt 10/4/1918 b. 2/5/1895; Died in service of

his country.

Thomas P. 11/30/1908 b. 2/16/1840; Faith, Hope, and

Charity.

NAME	DEATH DATE	REMARKS
BUSICK		
Elizabeth	5/15/1856	b. 6/27/1804; ag'd 51 yrs, 10 m, 18 ds. wife of D.H. Busick.
John	10/24/1841	"This stone is placed here in memory of John W.H. Busick, son of Durant H. and Elizabeth Busick who departed this life Oct. 24, 1841, in the 12th year of his age."
CARROLL		
Daniel T.	1914	b. 1829
George W.	1917	b. 1858
J. Thomas	1934	b. 1862
J. Wilson	1940	b. 1869
Maggie J.	1916	b. 1865
Mary Meador	1914	b. 1833
Mollie L	1944	b. 1875
William A.	1924	ь. 1860
DAVIS		
Ida C.	5/28/1957	b. 7/12/1871
FOSTER		
James M. Jimmie M.	4/15/1858 8/2/1861	ag'd 24 yrs. 1 mo. b. 5/2/1858; Son of J.M. and M.E. Foster - Only sleeping.
FRY		
Mary E.	9/29/1907	b. 3/4/1825; 82 yrs. 5 m's. 25 d's, wife of L.R. Fry.

DEATH DATE	REMARKS
3/20/1959 12/31/1939	b. 7/10/1898b. 5/27/1863; Born in Stuart,Virginia
1949 8/21/1926 6/12/1926	 b. 1876; Born in Davie County b. 8/13/1848 b. 11/29/1848
6/5/1844	Son of John and E. Gunn, died June 5, 1844, aged 4 mo. 20 d's: Suffer little children and come unto me, For such is the Kingdom of Heaven.
5/20/1939	b. 4/7/1865
ov 5/2/1906 nan 2/10/1900	b. 2/15/1828 b. 2/14/1821
Mar. 1934 7/18/1974 9/27/1953 5/12/1911 4/3/1933 3/15/1981 Jan.1930	b. June 1933 b. 11/27/1898 b. 12/24/1866 b. 4/29/1906; Dau of J.C. & A.E. Lasley b. 12/23/1861 b. 12/22/1892 b. May 1929
	3/20/1959 12/31/1939 1949 8/21/1926 6/12/1926 6/5/1811 5/20/1939 0v 5/2/1906 2/10/1900 Mar. 1934 7/18/1974 9/27/1953 5/12/1911 4/3/1933 3/15/1981

NAME	DEATH DATE	REMARKS
Marie	Apr. 1932	July 1931
MANION		
Essie Lasley	2/16/1923	b. 5/24/1889
MARSH		
Aubrey Lester	1986	b. 1907
MATKINS		
E.V.	9/11/1840	In Memory of E.V. Matkins, Died Sept. 11, 1840
McDONALD		
Eva B. James M. Anna MEADOR	11/11/1901 8/15/1927 7/6/1927	b. 9/15/1882 b. 2/4/1849 b. 5/2/1853
Annie C. Catherine W. Francis Jas. Geo. J. Joseph B. Mary Alice	12/23/1901 6/27/1883 8/25/1870 3/14/1909 11/15/1864 8/15/1904	b. 4/13/1836 b. 5/14/1812 b. 7/2/1808 b. 9/28/1851 b. 2/5/1843 b. 4/2/1854; Wife of S.J. Meador, Sleep on, dear one, sleep on. Thy work on earth well done. Thou hast gone to a brighter home. Resting in the
Mary E. Numa F. Samuel J. Sarah Fife	6/13/1896 8/5/1863 5/27/1911 7/6/1909	arm of His love. b. 10/2/1839 b. 6/8/1858 b. 4/26/1846 b. 12/5/1854

DEATH DATE	REMARKS
1957	b. 1889; At rest
3/19/1968	b. 10/15/1887
1983	b. 1918; Our Father which art in Heaven.
1957	b. 1894
11/12/1966 3/6/1973 7/30/1939	b. 10/29/1903 b. 5/10/1909 b. 7/31/1873
7/20/1980	b. 5/12/1887; Born in Guilford County
5/22/1985 7/15/1968	b. 11/26/1909 b. 8/27/1905 b. 1868
8/10/1941	b. 9/15/1915
12/23/1951	b. 10/31/1873
	b. 5/29/1902
	b. 3/9/1907 b. 8/31/1909
	1957 3/19/1968 1983 1957 11/12/1966 3/6/1973 7/30/1939 7/20/1980 5/22/1985 7/15/1968 1939 8/10/1941

1986

b. 1918

James Young

NAME	DEATH DATE	REMARKS
Pattie L.	1953	b. 1876; Church Organist.
R. Wilbur	10/25/1964	b. 7/4/1908
Robert Wilbur	1986	b. 1934
Russell	5/31/1911	b. 9/20/1910
Susan Anne	1912	b. 1838; Wife of John Young Stokes.
Willetta M.	4/22/1950	b. 10/5/1879
Willie Donald	10/6/1950	b. 8/23/1903
TUGGLE		
Timothy Lewis	s 4/14/1981	b. 6/20/1971; I am the good shepherd. I know mine and mine know me.
WALKER		
Mary S. Gibbs	12/24/1928	b. 5/22/1881; Wife of Jas. W. Walker, Her memory is blessed.
WARD		
Pattie Gibbs	12/30/1962	b. 3/13/1889
WEBB		
Margaret	1920	b. 1919
WOODSON		
Jane E. R. H.	3/10/1915 3/14/1926	b. 10/25/1834 b. 3/15/1856; Son of Robt. H., Thy will
Robert H.	2/2/1910	be done. b. 8/10/1824

Four Known Veterans:

Confederate Army: Carroll, Daniel T. Meador, Joseph B. Woodson, R. H.

World War I: Burton, Corp. P. Holt

There are 33 old graves near the Church marked only with fieldstones. The eastern part of the cemetery was composed entirely of fieldstones until 1974 when they were taken up and formed into a large monument nearby. On top of this monument is a plaque with the following inscription:

BE IT KNOWN
WITHIN THIS HOLY GROUND
ARE THE REMAINS OF LOVED
ONES KNOWN TO THE PEOPLE
OF THIS CHURCH - BE THEY
MAN, WOMAN, CHILD
MASTER OR SLAVE

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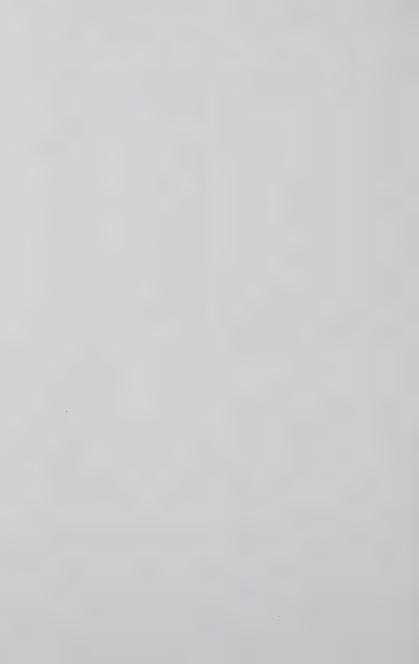
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Editorial Policy

The publication committee is interested in receiving articles on the history and genealogical source materials of Rockingham County and the adjacent area. The historical articles must be well written and thoroughly documented. Genealogical articles should consist of previously unpublished primary source materials pertaining to Rockingham County, such as abstract of local records and edited diaries, letters, or church records. Papers on family history should not be submitted. All copy, including footnotes, should be typed double-space. Articles and correspondence should be sent to the editor. Robert W. Carter, Jr., Route 2, Box 392, Reidsville, N.C. 27320.

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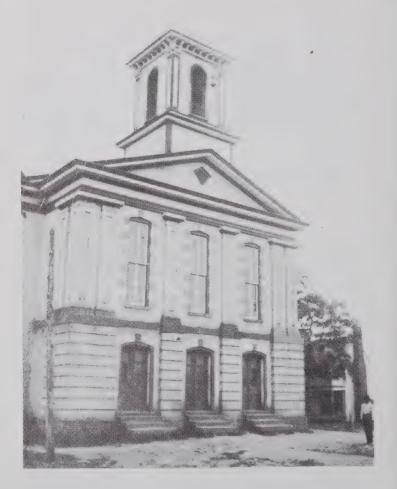
The old Rockingham County jail where John Broadnax was executed on May 22, 1903 for the murder of Sidney Blair. The jail built in 1858 was torn down and replaced by a new jail in 1910. Photograph courtesy Cora Ann Turner.

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The old Rockingham County Court House where John Broadnax was convicted of the murder of Sidney Blair in April, 1903. The Court House burned in October, 1906. Photograph courtesy of Phil Craddock.

THE LAST HANGING IN ROCKINGHAM COUNTY

TRANSCRIBED by Francis I. Anderson

NOTES and INTRODUCTION
by
Robert W. Carter, Jr.

INTRODUCTION

The last public execution in Rockingham County occurred on May 22, 1903. John Broadnax, a Black farm laborer, was hung at Wentworth for the murder of A. Sidney Blair a prominent farmer of the Oregon Hill area. Earlier executions' had been public spectacles with thousands of citizens in attendance. By 1903 state law required that executions not be viewed by the general public. Later executions took place in Raleigh under State supervision.

John Broadnax was hung inside the old county jail which was later torn down and replaced by a new building in 1910.

Charlie Rakestraw² of Eden, North Carolina may be the only surviving witness of the 1903 hanging. Rakestraw stated in 1983 that: "I saw most of the trial...(and) on the morning of the hanging I was planting corn. My daddy came out in the field and asked me if I wanted to go to the hanging. I said 'yes'. There was a high fence around the old jail. It went all the way around it and only 22 people were allowed inside to witness the hanging on the second floor. But there was a big tree outside near the jail and Sheriff Pinnix³... allowed us to climb up the tree so we could look in the window. They brought him up on the second floor, seated him there, tied his hands behind him and tied his feet together. They put the rope over his head and tightened it around his neck. A black cap was put over his head. They had built a scaffold on the second floor. The man who knocked the trap-door was Lamberth from Reidsville. After hanging, a doctor checked him about 10 or 15 minutes later. After he said he

was dead, they cut the rope down. They ... brought him outside ... and put his head up on a chair and his feet on the ground so people could see him."

Mary Raine Craddock' who resided in Wentworth at the time of the hanging later recalled: "All the witnesses at the hanging were given a piece of rope from the event ... That afternoon after the hanging it rained and the rain was slate colored." No one had ever seen such before in Wentworth."

Arthur Sidney Blair, the murder victim, was born April 28, 1845 in Pittsylvania County, Virginia. He moved to Rockingham County about 1890 when he purchased a 265 acre farm in the Oregon Hill area. Blair had several relatives living in the county including a sister Nancy Blair Settle who lived in the Mount Hermon Church area. Two of his cousins, James N. Blair and Mary Blair Gardner and family had moved to the Oregon Hill area by 1880 where they owned large tracts of land adjacent to the farm which Blair purchased in 1890.

A. Sid Blair was single and his niece Sallie Walker, ¹² a school teacher, ¹³ came from Pittsylvania County to keep house for him. After Blair's murder Sallie was invited to live with her cousin Nancy Blair Sheffield. ¹⁴ She accepted the offer and resided with the Sheffields until her marriage to a widower named John A. Glass on December 26, 1904. ¹⁵ The couple had one son whom they named Sidney Glass. ¹⁶ Sallie Walker Glass died March 12, 1927 and was buried in the Mount Hermon Baptist Church Cemetery. ¹⁷

A.S. Blair's 265 acre farm was sold to F.M. Stone in 1904¹⁸ who in turn sold the land to John H. and Samuel W. King in 1906.¹⁹ The Kings resided on the farm for some years and later their tenants, the Hudson Family, lived there for many years.²⁰ In 1977 the Kings sold the Blair farm to the Strader Family.²¹

The house where Sid Blair was murdered in 1903 still stands with only minor changes. ²² The dog run opening between the main house and the kitchen were Blair was killed has been enclosed and siding has been added to the structure. ²³ All the surrounding outbuildings from Blair's time also survive.

While it is not certain who wrote the newspaper reports on the murder and hanging in 1903, it is probable that a member of the Oliver Family²⁴ wrote the articles for *The Reidsville Review* and that Sam W. Cayton,²⁵ who worked with Col. John R. Webster²⁶ for a long period, wrote the articles for the *Webster's Weekly*. The newspaper reports have been transcribed for this article with only minor

changes.

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BRUTALLY MURDERED

From The Reidsville Review, March 20, 1903

Murdered by John Broadnax, who attempted to Rob the Premises --Miss Walker, a Niece of Mr. Blair, is Shot also.

One of the darkest crimes in the annals of Rockingham County was committed in the Carmel section, about five miles from Reidsville, last night. John Broadnax, a negro about sixteen years old, killed Mr. Sydney Blair, a most estimable old citizen of that section, and shot Miss Sallie Walker in three different places. ²⁷ Miss Walker is a school teacher and housekeeper for Mr. Blair.

The capture of the murderer and his confinement in the county jail within a few hours after the crime was committed without any danger of lynching, was a creditable piece of work for the citizens of that section and for Deputy Sheriff John C. Faucette.

About dark yesterday afternoon while Mr. Blair and his niece, Miss Walker, were at supper, John Broadnax entered the house and engaged in conversation with Mr. Blair. Without warning he drew his pistol and fired upon them. Mr. Blair was killed almost instantly, two balls, taking effect. One entered at the collar bone and the other pierced the bowels. He fell heavily to the floor.

Miss Walker was wounded at three different places, 28 one ball taking effect just under the skin of the neck, another went through the muscle of the arm, while still another grazed the thigh. With rare presence of mind, and realizing that the pistol chamber was empty, Miss Walker rushed on Broadnax and pushed him through the door, which she barred and placed a quilt under the prostrate form of her uncle. Then she removed her shoes and left the building to notify the neighbors, who rushed to the scene. 29

When they arrived at the scene of the crime, Broadnax was found in the kitchen in the act of pillaging the room. He was ordered to surrender and did so without resisting. ³⁰ He was taken unawares as he had thought both his victims had died from their wounds. When captured his pistel was found to have been reloaded, and but for the prompt action of the gentlemen who rushed in on him and thereby

exciting him he could and probably would have made his escape.

About the time Deputy Sheriff John C. Faucette arrived there was talk among those who had gathered which indicated that there was danger of Broadnax being murdered. Two or three suggested that the evidence was conclusive, that confession made doubt impossible, that there was danger of escape, but they were promptly told that would not do.³¹ "I know your faces" said Deputy Sheriff Faucette, "If you harm him or permit him to be harmed I will have you everyone arrested," he added. This quited those who were in the crowd. Mr. J.D. Glass was summoned to help take the prisoner to jail, and he and Deputy Faucette had placed him behind the prison bars before midnight.

The news of the horrible crime quickly spread to the adjoining farms and within a short time the premises were crowded with people. Broadnax made a full confession and stated that he was told by another party to commit the deed and that it was his intention to search the premises for money and valuables. He thought he had succeeded in killing both of the inmates of the house, and was surprised when he had time to realize that he was in the hands of people who would not permit him to leave.

Mr. Blair was perhaps about 60 years old. He was a native of Pittsylvania County, Virginia, and had only been a resident of this county about 10 years. His niece, Miss Sallie Walker, was his housekeeper and taught school in the neighborhood. She was about 25 years old $^{\rm 32}$ and was devoted to her aged Uncle. Her remarkable nerve and presence of mind has been the subject of general comment on the streets and elsewhere.



The Sidney Blair House in the Oregon Hill Community where John Broadnax murdered Blair on March 19, 1903. The dog-run between the front portion of the house and the kitchen was later enclosed.

Photograph courtesy Robert W. Carter, Jr. The home of Mr. Blair was robbed of about \$60 recently and officers have been trying to locate the perpetrator of that crime. Yesterday Broadnax passed through Reidsville and several people assert that he had a number of watches, new clothes and two or three valises. He left the Carmel section, where he had been working as a farm laborer for some time, about the time the money was missed from Mr. Blair's home. It is almost certain that he got the money at that time and returned last night to get what jewelry and other valuables he could find on the place.

Sheriff Pinnix notified Governor Aycock this morning of the terrible crime, and was assured that Broadnax would have a trial by a special term of court. Mayor Watt also received the following telegram from him:

'Please use your good officers to preserve the peace of the State. Special term of Court will be ordered. Assure the citizens that the law will be speedily enforced.'

ExSheriff Hutcherson and other...citizens have gone to the section where the crime was committed to advise the neighbors of Mr. Blair against any violence, should they be found to have such an idea in view.

MURDER TRIAL SET FOR APRIL 13

From The Reidsville Review, March 24, 1903

Broadnax to be Tried Promptly for His Atrocious Crime. Precaution taken by the Governor--Co. G. under the Command of Sheriff Pinnix Friday for the Purpose of Protecting the Murderer of Blair.

Governor Aycock on yesterday morning ordered a special term of court in Rockingham County to be held April 13th for the trial of criminal cases. Judge B.F. Long of Statesville will preside. This term is called at the earliest date allowed by law and is for the purpose of giving John Broadnax, who murdered Mr. Sydney Blair, a trial. Broadnax is now in jail in Raleigh. The term was ordered upon application of leading citizens of this county.

When The Review went to press Friday afternoon the murderer, John Broadnax, was behind the bars in the Wentworth jail, and up to that hour it was not supposed that he was in any danger of being summarily dealt with. Developments late in the afternoon, however, made it appear expedient to move him out of the county, and at the request of Governor Aycock, Sheriff Pennix accompanied by Mr. J.E. Lambeth, went to Wentworth and brought Broadnax here,

where he was given a preliminary trial before Magistrate J.B. Johnston, and bound over.³³ The commitment papers were filled out and the prisoner was carried to jail at Greensboro.

At the preliminary trial Broadnax told of the crime and plainly showed that he simply intended to rob the premises of what money there was to be found there. He had worked on the farm of Mr. Blair and was thoroughly acquainted with the old man's habits, having known that Mr. Blair kept a considerable amount of money at the place at all times. Sheriff Pinnix and Mr. Lambeth were witnesses and on their evidence Broadnax was bound over. A great many people have been heard to remark that he should not have been brought here to be put on the train - that there was more or less danger in view of the fact that there was so much excitement among the people here, and that it required only a few minutes notice to get a large crowd of these people together. As we see it the criticism or comment is without reason. In the first place the members of the local military company were in uniforms and in their armory under the command of Captain Gladstone for the purpose of protecting the law, and at the command of Sheriff Pinnix, and for the second reason that Broadnax could not be admitted to a jail in another county without first having been tried and bound over.

After the preliminary trial Broadnax was carried to the Southern station and placed in a closet³⁴ out of the sight of the crowd who had gathered for idle curiosity. There was no demonstration of any kind and no reason for supposing that the prisoner was in any danger. Every precaution was taken, however, and when the train came in the officers hurriedly placed him therein and the people returned to their work.³⁵

Arriving at Greensboro Sheriff Pinnix turned his prisoner over to Sheriff Jordan and received a receipt for the commitment papers. He assured the Guilford officer that Broadnax was brought there at the request of Governor Aycock, and as a matter of precaution; that if he found upon his return home that there was any danger of a mob moving toward Greensboro, he would notify him in plenty of time for him to get the prisoner away.

Friday night, however, some one wired the train dispatcher in Greensboro that every horse in the livery stables here was hired and that 500 men were organizing to move on to that city. Sheriff Jordan notified Governor Aycock and had him to order out the Gate City Guards to protect the prisoner and be under the command of Sheriff Jordan until he was placed on the Raleigh train. The train was late

and did not leave Greensboro until two o'clock Saturday morning. During the stay at the train the greatest excitement prevailed and the military organization was in ranks and ready for an attack momentarily.

When the train carrying Broadnax and the deputy pulled out of the station there was a sigh of relief from Sheriff Jordan and the people who were at the station, and the military boys were marched back to their armory where they were dismissed at 2:30.

Mr. W.I. Underwood, the live correspondent of the *Charlotte Observer*, visited the prisoner in his cell after he was confined in jail in Greensboro and says that he talked freely, saying his correct name was John Glenn and that he was not quite 15 years old. ³⁶ He said he killed Mr. Blair because he had been told to do so by a negro named Nat Fuller. He declared that he obtained only \$5 as a result of the robbery.

This correspondent says the coolness of the murderer impressed every one who saw him. He was asleep within a few minutes after he was brought to the jail, and when awakened and questioned about the tragedy he showed the utmost composure. He is a slender, dudish boy and he begged Sheriff Jordan for a few more minutes time in order that he carefully dress himself before leaving the jail.

A Review man rode six miles through a hard rain Saturday afternoon to the scene of the tragedy. Miss Sallie Walker, the young lady who was wounded, was interviewed.³⁷ She said:

"While we were at supper, John Broadnax, who is about sixteen years old, entered the dining room. Previous to that time he always knocked at the door or asked permission to enter. He engaged in a conversation with Uncle Sidney, and then without a word of warning pulled out a revolver and commenced firing at me. 38 Two shots took effect, one of the bullets entering at the skin of my neck and the other grazing my side. We arose, and as we did so Broadnax aimed at my Uncle. We were then all standing in a few feet of each other around the table. Broadnax fired two shots at Uncle Sidney, one ball entering the collar bone, and the other pierced his bowels. We followed the negro to the door he entered and I managed to push him out and latch the door. Mr. Blair wanted to open the door and follow Broadnax, but I stopped him, fearing that he would be shot again. Uncle asked 'Where did the ball hit you?' Before I could answer, or ask him where he was hit, he fell without speaking again or uttering another sound. Hearing me scream Broadnax returned and entered an unfastened door and began firing at me again. I succeeded in



Sallie Walker (1865-1927) who was shot by John Broadnax, when her uncle Sidney Blair was murdered March 19, 1903. She married John A. Glass in 1904.

Photograph courtesy Thelma F. Glass and Francis I. Anderson. (Mrs. Glass is the widow of Sidney Glass who was the son of Sallie Walker Glass).

pushing him out again and told him not to dare enter any more."

"Previous to that time I had never been uneasy when Broadnax came around. Even when he entered the kitchen that night I didn't fear him any more than I would have feared a cat and not as much as I would have feared a dog, because I would have been frightened if a strange dog had entered the room. The boy had worked for my Uncle and was acquainted with his habits and the premises. A few weeks ago some one robbed Uncle Sidney of between \$50 and \$80 and it is believed that Broadnax was the perpetrator of that crime."

"After blowing out the light and getting quiet I heard a noise in one of the front rooms. Broadnax was there trying the lock with a key. Then it flashed upon me that he had committed the murder in order to succeed in robbing the premises. My uncle was lying flat on his back and began to strangle. Then it was that I thought of extinguishing the light for my own safety and to do something for him. After remaining quiet a short while I heard Broadnax in the hall or front room, and thought then it was my opportunity to escape and secure aid. I slipped off my shoes and started by the eastern door, not knowing but what someone was standing there ready to kill me, but I took the chances. The boy evidently thought he had killed me. I used all the strength in my power to reach a neighbor and after many hard falls I finally succeeded in reaching the home of Mr. R. T. Estes a distance of one mile.39 Mr. Estes was not at home, but his nephew went after him and soon carried him to our home. They found Broadnax in one of the front rooms pillaging. Other neighbors were sent for. Mr. French was left to guard Broadnax. He placed his lantern at one door and rushed to the other one. The lantern caused Broadnax to think there were other people at that door and he attempted to make his exit out of the other one, just opposite. Mr. French was there, however and fired his pistol, causing him to turn back, and screamed out apparently to those people at the door where he left the lantern. 'Don't let him get out that door, boys'. He then commanded Broadnax to throw up his hands and surrender. The left hand went up promptly, but the right hand, which contained the pistol, was put in a position as though he expected to shoot. But the report of Mr. French's pistol unnerved him and he gave in. Broadnax succeeded in finding \$5.87, and was ransacking trunks when the neighbors reached here. My surmise is he thought there was a lot of money there, but since the last robbery Uncle Sydney had removed his money."

The remains of Mr. Blair were shipped to Pittsylvania County, Virginia today for interment. His Brother, Luther R. Blair, and Messrs. R. T. Estes, W. L. Sheffield and Scott Page accompanied the remains.

The citizens continue to discuss the bravery of Miss Walker, but nobody can ever know the real extent of her bravery until they see and talk to her. She is a woman 28 years old, 41 fine looking and is very intelligent. She has told the history of the tragedy numbers of times and she tells precisely the same to one and all. Mr. Blair was known as a man of strong convictions and was held in the very highest esteem by all who knew him. It is said that he kept large sums of money hidden on the premises. He was always liberal with his money and was noted as a big hearted contributor to those in need.

The coolness of the murderer has also caused much comment. Mr. Estes stated that Broadnax was cooler than the neighbors. He said that when they placed him in the buggy to carry him to the jail at Wentworth, he asked Deputy Sheriff Faucette to tie his bicycle on the rear of the buggy, that he might have a special use for it and ere the murderer had gone ten feet from the Blair home he was whistling a familiar burnt cork artists tune. He seemed very well contented in jail at Wentworth, but was delighted to be removed to Greensboro and Raleigh in order that he might 'see something of the world'. When he returns he will be closely guarded and there is little danger of violence before he can be tried.

Miss Walker stated that her uncle possessed much money; she

thought he had deposited it in a bank, but she thinks now he must have placed some of the money somewhere on the premises. As soon as she is able she will begin a search for the money and valuables.

Company G, Third Regiment, National Guard, promptly responded to the Governor's orders. Capt. Gladstone succeeded in having every member in the ranks in just fifty minutes after he was notified and the soldiers looked as if they were ready for business. The colonel of the Third Regiment, J. N. Craig, kept a close watch on the proceedings and pays a high compliment to the members of the crack company.

BROADNAX TO HANG MAY 22nd

From Websters Weekly, April 16, 1903

The special term of Rockingham Superior Court convened at Wentworth Monday. Judge Long was delayed an hour or more in reaching Wentworth.

Mr. D.W. Busick⁴² was appointed foreman of the grand jury. A true bill against John Broadnax for the murder of Mr. Sidney Blair was promptly returned. The prisoner was arraigned and having no counsel, the court appointed A. J. Burton to defend him. Messrs. Ira Humphreys,⁴³ A.D. Ivie⁴⁴ and P.W. Glidewell⁴⁵ were asked to assist in the defense. The trial was set for Wednesday and a venire of 100 was ordered summoned from which to elect the jury.

The trial of John Broadnax was taken up Wednesday afternoon. Senator Burton being unwell, John T. Pannill, 46 took his place in conducting the defense. Solicitor Graves 47 was assisted by R. D. Reid. 48 The evidence was substantially in agreement with the story of the crime published in this paper a few weeks ago and was absolutely conclusive. The case was given to the jury at about midnight, who brought in a verdict of guilty in a few minutes.

The following composed the jury: J.M. Gallaway, Jr., ⁴⁹ C.W. Seay, J.A. Bevill, C.P. Young, Z.B. Brame, W.C. Smothers, Geo. W. Parks, Jr., Walter Roberts, Chas. Thomas, J.H. Dyer, R.C. Sartin, T.C. Peay.

The greatest crowd ever seen at court attended the trial. The court house was packed. Judge Long deferred sentence till this morning (Thurdsay), when he set May 22 as the day when the murderer shall expiate his crime on the gallows. All executions in this county in the past have been public, but the law has been changed as we under-

stand. The last hanging was a triple affair, two men and a woman, for murder, and took place near the county home Jan. 13, 1882. 50 The gallows stood for several years. It is recalled that the last prisoner sentenced to death in this county before this was in a case of arson. The condemned, "Spider" Scales, died before the sentence of the court was inflicted.

BROADNAX'S LAST DAYS

From The Reidsville Review, May 19, 1903

Broadnax who is to be executed next Friday, the 22nd inst., at Wentworth is only 15 years of age, according to his own statement. But there were witnesses on the stand who testified he was at least 16 years old, and one witness testified that he was 17.

He is chunky and does not possess a bad expression of countenance. He is about 5 feet 6 inches tall, single and was born in Rockingham County. His mother had not seen him before he was tried for nearly two years. His Grandmother testified he was an unruly boy and that she tried to raise him right but that she could not do anything with him, and that he finally ran away and left her. His Mother said she gave him away at the age of 9 months, and that she had a baby then two weeks old. He is shrewd and doesn't have much to say; he is stubborn. The Judge found he would not answer questions readily. He asked the jailer not long since if he knew where the poor house was; being answered in the affirmative, he replied nonchalantly: 'Well, I guess everybody else in the county does too.'

He was tried at an April term of the Circuit court ordered by the Governor.

The murderer said on Sunday that he was then too early to be at all concerned about himself, he knew what religion was, but didn't know that he would go to heaven. As long as he has a penny and good things to eat he is supremely happy.

The scaffold has been erected in the jail on the second floor, a four foot petition cut from which he will fall to the first floor. Thirty eight people will witness the execution.

Thus far Broadnax has made no disposition of his body. He said several days ago he would readily sell it if he could only get good things to eat the balance of his days. One physician wrote the murderer that he was exceedingly anxious for his body, that he wanted to examine his brain, and that he would pay him \$5 for the same. Broadnax was highly indignant and replied: 'That doctor ought to

have his own brain examined.'

BROADNAX HANGED

From The Reidsville Review, May 22, 1903

The Execution today at 1:30 -- The Prisoner Calm to The Last.

John Broadnax, who murdered Mr. Sidney Blair, an aged and highly esteemed citizen of the Oregon section, was hanged for his crime at Wentworth today at 1:35 P.M. The execution took place in the presence of thirty-odd people and the guards allowed the Sheriff by law. Deputy Sheriff J.E. Lambeth sprung the trigger which ended the career of one of the most remarkable murderers known in history, and the execution was in every way a complete success. Death re-

Early in the day there was a considerable crowd of people assembled at and near the jail, some of them being there to witness the execution, but a great majority were there through idle curiosity.

sulted within twelve minutes after the trap had been thrown, and

there was no sign of a struggle or of pain to the victim.

About two hours before Deputy Sheriff Lambeth and Jailor Shade Martin went in to have the prisoner change his clothing, Rev. B.B. Hill, Pastor of the colored Baptist Church of Reidsville, Mr. S.W. Cayton of Webster's Weekly, and a representative of The Review, were admitted into the jail to see and talk with the prisoner.

The prisoner did not show the slightest excitement, and talked fully with Rev. Hill about his condition. 'You know you have only a few hours to live, don't you John' asked the minister. 'How do you feel about it?'

'Just feel sorry about it' the prisoner replied.

Asked if he had been trying to get forgiveness for his sins, and if he had been praying, he replied that he had, but that he had no relief; that he had not made repentance.

Asked if he wanted to have a prayer for himself he said he did. When an offer was made to get him to state just why he committed the crime he stated promptly that it was only to get what money Mr. Blair had. 'Did you get the money' asked Rev. Hill. 'No - only \$5.87 said the prisoner.' 'Are you in your right mind?' 'Yes Sir' he answered. Asked again why he committed that crime, he said 'I only wanted that money'.

Rev. Hill then asked John if he had ever attended Sunday School,

and he said he had at Greensboro and Chapel Hill Church. The Minister then sang a hymn, "There is not a Friend like the Holy Jesus," the prisoner also singing, and quoted scripture found in the 10th chapter of Romans. He referred to the lesson taught in the Bible of how the thief on the cross got forgiveness of all sin and compared John's condition with that of the party spoken of in the scriptures. He then prayed fervently and invited the prisoner to pray also.

"How do you feel now, John?"

No answer.

"Do you feel better satisfied about this matter? Did you try to pray?"
"Yes Sir, I feel about the same."

"If you believe in Christ, why not trust him?" The Minister then quoted the 23rd Psalm. "Do you want the other good people to pray for you, John?"

"If you think they can do me any good."

"Are you satisfied at being hanged as you will be?"

"Yes Sir, I guess I am."

He was then asked if there was anything else he wanted those present to do for him; he said there was not.

Asked by one of the representatives of the press if he had any arrangement with anyone to commit the crime, he said he did not, that no one knew of his intention. Asked if he had not talked with Nat Fuller about this he said he did not. He knew Nat Fuller at Greensboro, but never talked with him about the crime.

"Did you know where Mr. Blair kept his money?"

"No Sir, I knew nothing about his money."

"Did Mr. Blair ever do you any wrong?"

"No Sir."

Questioned by Rev. Hill as to whether he was mad with Mr. Blair when he shot at him, he said he was not.

The reporter asked him if he intended to kill Miss Walker too, and he declined to answer, but when asked if he thought both were dead he said he did.

He stated that he knew nothing of the money being stolen from Mr. Blair previous to the date on which the crime was committed, and when he was asked how he bought the bicycle, watch, etc. he said it was with money he made working on brickyards of Jennings & Watson's in Greensboro. He worked there last fall and winter he said.

He said he wanted the money he thought he would get at Mr. Blair's to go to Kenova, W. Va. He had been to Pennsylvania once. He had seen none of his people since his trial. He had been living at his aunt

and his grandmother's recently.

Dr. Ellington⁵¹ was admitted to ascertain for Miss Walker if he went back into the kitchen after she made her escape, and the prisoner said he did not. He was then asked when he left his hat in there and he said when she pushed him out of the door. The prisoner said it was stated in the court room that he was seventeen years old, others said sixteen, and that he thought he was fifteen.

He consented to have a photographer make his picture after he had been dressed, and the reporters and the ministers retired.

Sheriff Pinnix issued tickets to those who were permitted to see the execution before the dinner hour, and sent Deputy Lambeth and Jailor Martin into the jail to have the prisoner properly dressed for the execution. About half-past twelve o'clock Rev. W.P. Ware, a Methodist Minister of Reidsville, the representatives of the press and three or four colored ministers were admitted to the jail to see and talk with the prisoner.

Broadnax was neatly dressed in a nicely fitting suit of dark clothes, with patent leather shoes, white shirt and collar and looked neat and clean. He greeted the visitors to his cell pleasantly and talked freely with the ministers who were disposed to ask him questions. A colored preacher who had worked for Mr. Blair, Broadnax's victim, asked him if he wanted them to pray for him, and he replied that he did if they thought it would do him any good. The minister did so in a very fervent manner, showing considerable emotion and concern over the condition of the prisoner. Rev. J.A. Carter, of Reidsville, followed and prayed earnestly for the salvation of the boy. Broadnax all along maintained that air of indifference which has characterized his conduct since he was first arrested after the crime was committed.

The jail door was at this juncture thrown open and those from the outside who were entitled to witness the execution were allowed to come into the building. Among the crowd were the neighbors of the victim of the prisoner, Sheriff Pinnix' deputies, and his guard and a few other citizens. The prisoner was then carried into the room upstairs where the trap door was, and when everything was quiet Rev. Hill was asked by Sheriff Pinnix to make any remarks he desired.

The Minister said that this was the most serious of all the experiences of all his life. He had decided that the prisoner was, if his own words could be believed, a boy of good habits, yet one who had said that he deliberately planned and executed one of the most horrible crimes known in the history of the State. He was sorry to have to say to the people present that so far as he could ascertain from the talks

he had with him the prisoner up to that hour had not confessed Christ. He knew nothing more he could say for him and closing with an exhortation to his hearers to realize the importance of serving God and living with Him; he then led in prayer, asking the prisoner to kneel with him. During the prayer it was noticeable that the boy was carefully attentive and as soon as the last words were spoken he was on his feet again, and told Deputy Lambeth that he wanted to speak a few words.

THE PRISONER MAKES STATEMENTS

"My time is running short," he said. "I want to tell you all that I went there and killed that good old man because I wanted his money. This will be a warning for all boys here today. He never did me any harm and was always kind to me and paid me for my work. I just made up my mind to go there and kill him to get that money. I shot that lady too. I did it by myself. No one helped me or promised to help me. I put another fellow in it who was innocent. So No one told me to do it or put it in my head. I put it on him because I thought it would make it lighter on me. He is as innocent as you all are."

"I brought this on my own self. My time is running short and I know I ain't got long to live and I want to tell what I done it for. I am sorry that I done such a thing. It can't be hoped now."

Asked by one of the ministers if he thought he would meet his God, he replied, "I hope and trust I can meet him."



An eastern view of the Sidney Blair house showing the kitchen ell where Blair was murdered on March 19, 1903.

Photograph courtesy Robert W. Carter, Jr.

"I think it right for them to hang me for killing a poor old man in cold blood. Tell everybody not to do like I did - it will bring them in trouble. Tell all the boys. Tell mother that I have tried to meet God." Here his voice quivered preceptibly and he got out his handkerchief to wipe away the perspiration. "And tell my people good bye and that I hope they will meet Him too. I couldn't have done anything any badder than that."

Sheriff Pinnix: "John, it is but a few minutes before you will be dead; now tell us the truth in the presence of God, did you have any thing to do with the taking of that first money which was stolen from Mr. Blair or do you know any thing about it?"

The prisoner: "I did not. I didn't know any thing about it until I heard him asking about it after I had killed him. I had some very nice clothes on and they just suspicioned that I did."

The prisoner was hesitating and Deputy Sheriff Lambeth was in the act of getting behind him to fasten the ropes when he asked:

"Ain't they going to take my picture?"

He was then brought to the proper position on the trap door and photographer Rochelle of Reidsville, made the exposures.

The prisoner then said, "Tell my Mother and folks I say farewell, God bless them. You all the same. I hope you will never be guilty of the crime I committed. May I have some water, please Sir? I never did want water so bad!" Water was handed to him and he drank heartily, and he thanked the Sheriff. "I hope you will do it right at once so I won't have to suffer."

Sheriff Pinnix: "What shall we do with your valise, John? Send it to your Mother?"

"Well Sir, I promised it to the boy Bob which stays around here, and I don't want to change my promise. Give my Mother your love if you see her any of you all."

Sheriff Pinnix was taking out the death warrant to read and Deputy Sheriff Lambeth was in the act of tying the cap behind him when he asked to see daylight again and added, "Let me see you read it please."

The cap was removed, and he listened attentively to Sheriff Pinnix as he read the words which justified the officers in taking his life.

"I don't charge none of you all with what you are fixing to do, don't charge it to nobody but myself. Good bye to you all."

The legs and hands had been tied and the cap was securely fastened. There was but a few more seconds for John Broadnax to be in this world. The noose was placed over his neck and Deputy Lambeth touched the lever. The murderer shot through the opening into the space below.

Just eleven minutes and fifty-eight seconds had elapsed from the time the trap fell until life was extinct and the body cut down. The remains were placed in the coffin and brought out for those who were outside to see.

Drs. Matherson & McGehee,⁵⁴ of Madison, had bought the body paying three dollars therefor and it was turned over to them.

The scaffold from which the execution took place was in the top story of the jail and was a neatly arranged affair.

DETAILS OF THE CRIME

On the evening of the 19th of March Broadnax went to Mr. Blair's house. The latter and his niece were at supper. Broadnax entered and began talking to Blair and his niece. He advanced to the door and began firing at Miss Walker, wounding her in two places. She jumped up as quickly as possible and Broadnax fired at Blair. He shot at him twice. Blair asked his niece where she was hit, but before she could answer he fell heavily to the floor. After administering to Blair Miss Walker blew out the light and left the house to give the alarm. In the meantime Broadnax had gone to a front room for the purpose of pillaging. Removing her shoes Miss Walker went to the home of Mr. R. T. Estes who lived nearly a mile away. The latter with other gentlemen went to the Blair home where after a stubborn resistance Broadnax surrendered. Blair probably died before his niece left the home. There had been some money stolen from the premises previous to the tragedy. It was generally believed that Broadnax stole that money and was aiming to rob the house again, knowing that Blair had considerable money about the place. The ball that entered Mr. Blair's neck proved fatal. The second wound was to the left of his breast bone and lower edge of his sixth rib.

NOTES

¹The last previous execution in the county occurred in 1882 when two men and a woman were hung for the murder of her husband. The execution was held near the site of the lake behind the Rockingham County School Bus Garage east of Wentworth.

²Charlie Rakestraw was born June 9, 1890 and enjoys good health.

³M. Frank Pinnix of Reidsville served as sheriff of Rockingham County from 1902-1908 and from 1910-1912.

⁴Mary Raine Craddock born 1890, died 1984, was the daughter of Dr. John R. Raine a Civil War surgeon. About 1970 she related these stories to the late Nancy Withers who prepared typed copies of the material. Copy furnished to the writer by

Michael Perdue of Wentworth.

⁵This refers to the number of witnesses required to observe the hanging. Newspaper reports say 38 people witnessed the hanging.

⁶Tradition relates that some superstitious people took the slate colored rain as a bad omen caused by the hanging. Both the years 1903 and 1904 were long remembered as years of severe drought with unusual weather conditions.

⁷Sidney Blair was the son of Samuel Blair (1789-1870) and Clarissia W. Fuller Blair who were married in Pittsylvania County, Virginia in 1834. Blair research material furnished to the writer by Luke Gardner of Reidsville and John Thomas Dallas of Eden on April 28, 1987. Hereinafter cited as Blair research.

⁸Rockingham County Deed Book 85, p. 398.

⁹Nancy S. Blair married William M. Settle in Pittsylvania County in October, 1851. From the *Blair research*. The Settles came to Rockingham County about 1880 when they purchased a 372 acre farm on Town Creek and a 242 acre farm near Mount Herman Church. See Rockingham County Deed Books: 3dN, p. 90; 3dM, p. 152. No relationship has been proven between this family and the Settles who located in eastern Rockingham County during the 18th Century.

¹⁰ James N. Blair was the son of Josiah and Frances Pennick Blair. Josiah was a first cousin of A. Sid Blair. James came to Rockingham County about 1880 and was a school teacher, merchant and large land owner. He never married and died in 1894. See Rockingham County Deed Books: 3dP, p. 286; 3dT, p. 569; Book 94, p. 361; Book 102, p. 266. The Blairs were descendants of William Blair who immigrated from Northern Ireland to America about 1770. From the Blair research.

¹¹Mary Blair was a sister of James N. Blair. In 1875 she married William L. Gardner in Caswell County, North Carolina. From the *Blair research*. The Gardners purchased land in Rockingham County jointly with her brother James in 1880. See Rockingham County Deed Book 3dP, p. 286. The Gardners later sold part of this land to her niece Nannie Blair Sheffield and husband William L. Sheffield. See Deed Book 132, p.443.

¹²Sallie Walker was the daughter of Robert A. Walker who married Sid Blair's sister Julia on March 3, 1864 in Pittsylvania County. From the Blair research.

¹³Sallie Walker was probably a teacher at the District Number Nine School near Mount Carmel Methodist Church.

¹⁴Nancy "Nannie" Blair was the daughter of William Thomas Blair and granddaughter of Josiah Blair who was a first cousin of Sid Blair. From the *Blair research*.

¹⁵In a letter from Mary Sheffield Dallas to John Thomas Dallas dated February 14, 1978 she stated: "Sallie Walker stored alot of things in my home...Mama gave her a room as long as she wanted it. She stayed with us for sometime." Mary S. Dallas was a daughter of William L. Sheffield and Nannie Blair and thus a distant cousin of Sallie Walker. Rockingham County marriage records.

¹⁶Stated in a letter from Sarah Glass Simpson of Richmond, Virginia to Francis I. Anderson of Greensboro, North Carolina dated January 26, 1987. Sid Glass (now deceased) was a bank employee in Reidsville, North Carolina.

¹⁷Tombstone in Mount Hermon Church Cemetery.

¹⁸Rockingham County Deed Book 146, p. 139.

¹⁹Rockingham County Deed Book 151, p. 486.

²⁰Stated in March 1987 by Naomi Webb King whose husband's family owned the Blair farm from 1906-1977.

²¹Rockingham County Deed Book 716, p. 844.

The Last Hanging in Rockingham County

²²The writer visited the Blair house in March 1987 with John David, Samyria and Naomi W. King of Reidsville.

²³Stated by Naomi W. King, March 1987.

²⁴The Oliver Family came from Caswell County to Reidsville and founded *The Reidsville Review* newspaper in 1888 and owned the paper until 1971. See *The Reidsville Review*, August 13, 1979.

²⁵Sam W. Cayton acquired Webster's Weekly newspaper after John R. Webster's death in 1909 and continued to publish the paper for some years afterwards. See The

Reidsville Review, December 3, 1909.

²⁶John R. Webster was born October 18, 1845 in western Rockingham County. He served in the Civil War and in 1872 moved to Reidsville where he later founded Webster's Weekly. He was a Republican and a staunch prohibitionist which resulted in quarrels with many Reidsville citizens. Tradition relates that Webster engaged in numerous fistfights on the streets of Reidsville. See *The Reidsville Review*, August 13, 1979.

²⁷Sallie Walker later stated that she was shot twice.

²⁸Ibid.

²⁹Webster's Weekly, March 26, 1903, states that the neighbors were Estes, French and Page.

³⁰Webster's Weekly, March 26, 1903 states that Mr. French shot at and missed Broadnax when he stuck his head out the door.

³¹Webster's Weekly. March 26, 1903, reported that "Feeling ran high as the news of the terrible affair spread abroad and all sorts of reports were in circulation as to lynching bees and the like." The only known lynching in Rockingham County after the Civil War occurred in the 1870s or 1880s when a man was hung near the Iron Works for the rape of the wife of a prominent Reidsville citizen.

³²Sallie Walker was about 38 years old.

33 Webster's Weekly, March 26, 1903 reported that the preliminary hearing was held at the office of Crafton & Mitchell's Livery stable in Wentworth.

³⁴Webster's Weekly, March 26, 1903 stated that Broadnax was guarded in the restroom of the colored section of the depot.

³⁵Webster's Weekly, March 26, 1903 reports that hundreds of citizens waited on the platform to get a glimpse of Broadnax.

 36 Webster's Weekly, March 26, 1903 stated that Broadnax also used the alias Courts.

³⁷Webster's Weekly, March 26, 1903 reported the same interview with Sallie Walker, stating that she was interviewed by a reporter of The Charlotte Observer.

³⁸Webster's Weekly. March 26, 1903, stated that Broadnax claimed Blair owed him an additional quarter for a weeks work. Broadnax had followed Blair home from Reidsville that afternoon riding on his bicycle.

³⁹Naomi W. King stated in March, 1987 that Mr. Estes lived one half mile north of the Blair house on the present Estes Road. Sallie Walker had to cross a rocky branch to get to the Estes house.

40 Sid Blair was buried in the Blair Family Cemetery which is located west of Chatham near Rondo. Sallie Walker's parents are also buried in this cemetery.

⁴¹Sallie Walker's tombstone reveals that she was 38 years old at this time.

⁴²D.W. Busick was a businessman who lived in Madison. Years earlier he had been Register of Deeds for Rockingham County.

³Ira Humphreys was born near Bethany in Rockingham County and began the

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practice of law at Wentworth in 1901 but moved to Reidsville in 1910.

⁴⁴Allan D. Ivie (Sr.) moved with his family to Leaksville, North Carolina in the late 1800s where he became a distinguished member of the North Carolina Bar.

⁴⁵P.W. Glidewell was born in Stokes County, North Carolina and lived in and practiced law in Wentworth from 1903 until 1906 when he moved to Reidsville.

⁴⁶John T. Pannill was Rockingham County Clerk of Superior Court during the early 1890s. He later practiced law in Reidsville.

⁴⁷Stephen Porter Graves was born in Mount Airy and began the practice of law there in 1887. In 1902 he was elected solicitor for the Eleventh Judicial District, an office he occupied for many years.

⁴⁸Reuben D. Reid, a Wentworth attorney, was a son of North Carolina Governor David S. Reid.

⁴⁹John M. Gallaway, Sr. was a resident of Madison and owned vast tracts of farm land in Rockingham County where his tenants grew large quantities of tobacco. J.M. Gallaway, Jr., inherited these lands at his fathers death in 1909. He later built a fine home on North Elm Street in Greensboro where he died in the 1920s.

⁵⁰Those hung were Joe Hays, Eldridge Scales and Matilda Carter. They were executed for the muder of Matilda's husband Nash Carter.

⁵¹Dr. Sam Buck Ellington was a physician who lived in Wentworth.

 $^{52}\mathrm{Rev.}$ W.P. Ware was a merchant in Reidsville and later became an Apostolic Holiness minister.

⁵³Here Broadnax refers to Nat Fuller.

⁵⁴Dr. Robert C. Matheson was born in Taylorsville, North Carolina and after completing his education in Baltimore in 1891 he began his practice in Madison, North Carolina. Dr. John W. McGehee was born in Madison and completed his education in Baltimore in 1904. He located in Reidsville in 1905 and continued his practice until his death in 1941.

THE STORY OF A LOST FORTUNE

 $\mathbf{B}\mathbf{y}$

Hugh Jack Johnson

Editor's note: Hugh Jack Johnson is a retired employee of the Carolina-Virginia Tobacco Company and resides in Reidsville.

Nancy Bushrod Brown (1816-1892) sleeps in the Courts-Burton Cemetery by the railroad tracks near Stacey in Rockingham County, North Carolina. Beside Nancy lies her husband William Johnson (1813-1896). William was a farmer in Caswell County, North Carolina, where he met Nancy and married her in 1838. They moved to Rockingham County about 1859. Here he went to work for William Pinkney Watt at Lawsonville. Watt made William overseer of his plantation when the Civil War began. After the war, in 1876 Watt sold Johnson eighty-five acres of land on which Johnson had lived at the confluence of the north and south prongs of Lick Fork Creek, and edging the road known today as the Narrow Guage Road.

Nancy Brown Johnson's story is another Cinderella tale except Nancy didn't make it to the ball. She was born the granddaughter of Nancy Fauntleroy, a socialite of pre-revolutionary King & Queen County, Virginia.⁵

Nancy Fauntleroy married Dr. Nathaniel Carpenter March 17, 1768, a Devonshire gentleman, and brother to Coryndon Carpenter Esq. of Launceston, Cornwell, England. Dr. Carpenter arrived in King & Queen County from England in 1766 as collector of His Majesty's customs. Nancy Fauntleroy and her husband Dr. Carpenter enjoyed the upper class society that flourished in the eastern Virginia counties at that time. They were members of Christ Church. They were entertained at parties and invited to many balls. When Vernon Metcalfe was born into that prominent family in 1771, his sponsors were "Dr. Nathaniel Carpenter and wife."

Nancy Fauntleroy had four sons by Nathaniel Carpenter: Nathaniel Jr., William Fauntleroy, Bushrod, and Coryndon. Coryndon was

named after their wealthy uncle, Coryndon Carpenter Esq. back in England.⁸ The Carpenter children had it made. Their father was the King's tax collector of King & Queen County, Virginia.

But in 1776 dark, ominous clouds had gathered over Nancy Carpenter's sophisticated domain. The winds of a revolution were blowing away her happy lifestyle. The Carpenter family became very unpopular and at times feared for their safety. They fled into the mountains of Botetourt County, Virginia where Dr. Carpenter died in 1778 a sick and broken man. His inventory listed only one cow and a few meager household items.

Nancy Fauntleroy Carpenter returned with her sons to King & Queen County around 1780. On May 12, 1781 she married Robinson Shackelford in Christ Church. ¹² Nancy married Shackelford under the name Ann Bushrod Carpenter, probably to disguise the fact that she had been the wife of a British tax collector.

Ann Bushrod Shackelford had three children by Robinson Shackelford: Sally (c.1782-c.1864), Richard (b. before 1797) and John (b. after 1797 in his mother's 50th year). 13

Whether Robinson Shackelford had been a revolutionist or was loyal to the King is unknown. However, he and Ann left King & Queen County around 1788 and settled in Rockingham County, North Carolina bringing with them their daughter Sally Shackelford and Ann's youngest son by Dr. Carpenter, Bushrod Carpenter. Here they bought a mill (formally Parrott's Upper Mill) and one hundred acres on Burchfield Fork of Wolf Island Creek. Ann's other three sons remained in Virginia.

Evidently the mill and farm did not prosper. In 1791 Shackelford borrowed money on the property from their friend back in King & Queen County, Humprey Garrett. ¹⁶ By 1793 Shackelford had defaulted on payment and Garrett took possession of their land and mill. ¹⁷

Now destitute, Robinson and Ann Shackelford with their daughter Sally moved into Caswell County. Bushrod Carpenter went back to his brothers who were now in Mathews County, Virginia, at North River where they had formed a shipping company.¹⁸

The Shackelfords lived in obscurity in Caswell County, evading census takers and practically becoming recluses. Letters to Ann dated 1795 and 1797 from her sons Bushrod and Coryndon and delivered to her from North River by a Mr. Grant, indicated that the Shackelfords were in dire need of funds.

Then, good news came from England to Mathews County. The

Grace thather day to 1797 I am kappy to improve this approximation of in form I wan that I am well and hoping that These lines wise hind you and are the favoring wheeper houth I am enace my long relines have grandow unresides but you makes shore it and not for the want if my duty, but how the want of in sportunity This is the tast I expect made you want theory from me before y I shall come to me you thick be in about fair or five mounts and if got for the time minter on will be about & historials is opposition of the selvis that I don't expect a shall have one before then but if if do you maty shore I shall not litit escape with riting to you ifferen my Love to bor Shackeying and noter tally and my tette Vito Shows Rimember me to all ongues herio J/3 This chyon- when marzan Us her faint · Lindaloverna dist Was in shenry Distres Carpenty's

Copy of the Bushrod Carpenter letter courtesy of Colt Johnson, Ruffin, North Carolina.

Carpenter boys' Uncle Coryndon Esq. of Cornwall had died and his entire estate was to go to the four sons of his deceased brother, Dr. Nathaniel Carpenter. The mother of these four boys, Nancy Fauntleroy Carpenter Shackelford of Caswell County, would share a child's part. Now the letters from Ann's sons were hearty assurances that she would shortly be living in prosperity. In July, 1797 Bushrod wrote "Give my love to Mr. Shackelford and sister Sally and my little brother."

The optimistic Carpenter boys were also pressed for money. In one letter Coryndon told of losing a cargo of goods. In another he wrote that he was pleased that a customer had paid him thirty pounds that he sorely needed. 19

At this point all correspondence ceased, and Mr. Grant on a return trip from North River informed Ann Shackelford that there was bad news. The English Courts would not release such money into a country that had just whipped them in a revolution, and any beneficiary receiving a share of the estate would have to return and live within the British Empire. Bushrod was going to England to see what could be done.²⁰

Nothing remains today to shed any light on what happened to Bushrod Carpenter except a torn bit of letter written in a strange handwriting on which the only legible words were "He was lost in an accident at sea." Down through the years it has been assumed that the writer of this letter was informing the family about the death of Bushrod.

The Carpenter family fortune came to light again when in 1879 Nancy Bushrod Brown Johnson clipped an article from the Raleigh Observer newspaper.²² A gentleman from San Francisco, California, was seeking information about descendants of Bushrod Carpenter. Uncle Coryndon Esq.'s estate in England was still intact and valued at nine hundred thousand dollars.²³

According to the gentleman from California, Dr. Carpenter's sons Nathaniel Jr., William Fauntleroy, and Coryndon were all dead without issue and any descendant of Bushrod Carpenter would be the beneficiary of the entire estate. The gentleman from California did not reveal his name but gave the office of the Raleigh Observer as a contact.

Nancy Brown Johnson nor her mother Sally Shackelford Brown, or Sally's mother Ann Bushrod Carpenter Shackelford ever knew what became of the other three Carpenter boys but family tradition and that piece of old letter had assured them that Bushrod had been



Nancy Bushrod Brown Johnson (1816-1892) about 1861. Photograph courtesy Dr. Sara Courts McClure.

lost at sea.24

Therefore, the closest living relative to Bushrod Carpenter was Nancy Bushrod Brown Johnson whose mother Sally Shackelford (half sister to Bushrod) married James Brown (1780-c.1866) in Caswell County in 1815. ²⁵ James and Sally Shackelford Brown moved to the present Narrow Gauge Road after 1850. They died between 1860 and 1870 and were buried in the Courts-Burton Cemetery. ²⁶

Elated with great expectations, Nancy Brown Johnson and her husband William took their newspaper clipping along with the Carpenter letters to attorneys A.J. Boyd and J.W. Reid at Went-

of whom are believed to have died win out issue. By deather has the family, large property, valued at not less thi nine hundred thousand dollars, Vas Ad en to the children of these four broght and as the three others died without issue, the whole amount will got to the chileren of Bushrod Carpenter. ' H was brought into North Chedina who quite young by his mother, the wide of Dr. Carpenter, and she is believe to have married again here. ter seems worth inquiring, into, and any of the descendants of bahred to penter or any person able to give it formation concerning them, will app at the office of this paper, they co learn the name of the gentleman inq ring for them .- Ruleigh Observer.

Notice of the Carpenter Estate as reprinted from The Raleigh Observer in 1879. Courtesy Colt Johnson.

worth. The lawyers thought the matter worth looking into and contacted the newspaper office in Raleigh. The *Observer* put them in touch with Raleigh Attorney J.H. Fleming who was acting on behalf of the gentleman from California. Fleming contacted the law firm of Elborough & Dean of London, England, and this put in motion Nancy Brown Johnson's wheels of fortune. ²⁷ Nancy was the closest living relative to Carpenter and she had been the only descendant to respond to the newspaper inquiry.

However, should Nancy Johnson's quest for her inheritance be fruitful, one half of this estate would go to her dead brother Thompson Brown's children, Mary, Sallie, and James (Jim Bob) Brown.²⁸

By the middle of 1880, as things were, or seemed to be, going nicely, Nancy Brown Johnson's two children Sarah and Andrew childed their mother about her good fortune. They called her "Lady Nancy of Lick Fork", and they begged her to buy them a castle when she got to England. If Nancy had any doubts about moving to England she,

kept them to herself for the sake of her children. But she was now in her mid-sixties and had deep roots here. When the Civil War broke out her husband William who had inherited some money from his father's estate in Caswell County converted it into gold and kept it buried around the house. ²⁹ It was with this money that they were able to buy their farm. And Nancy had watched her children playing below in Lick Fork Creek, and at Watt's Mill, the Hanging Rock and the Indian Den. Above all this on the high hill "Uncle Billy and Aunt Nancy" lived. ³⁰

Up the road one-half mile from Uncle Billy and Aunt Nancy, lived Aunt Nancy's three co-inheritors, Mary, Sallie, and Jim Bob Brown. Their father Thompson Brown (1819-c.1878), deceased brother of Nancy, had been a well-to-do blacksmith, farmer, and owner of several hundred acres of land. In 1862 when the Confederacy needed a railroad from Danville, Virginia, to Greensboro, North Carolina, Thompson sold the Piedmont Railroad a right of way. After the war, like many others, he lost much of his holdings. Thompson Brown married Artelia Douglas (1820-c.1885) in Rockingham County in 1848. In 1860 Thompson Brown's farm bordered the south side of the Narrow Gauge Road at the Narrow Gauge overpass of Highway US 29. His home stood approximately 300 ft. southeast of the overpass. This big square yellow house with brown shutters is where in 1880 we find Thompson's widow Artelia and her three children living, and praying that Nancy Brown Johnson's ship would soon come in.

Thompson's daughter Mary (1854-1931) was a quiet, stylish, very much dignified girl who went with "folks that had money." Her sister Sallie (1864-1935) was flamboyant, and if made upset, "she could out cuss a mule skinner." 33 Sallie followed Mary around wherever Mary went with the folks who had money. Their brother Jim Bob (1850-1882) dressed fit as a bandbox, was a smooth talker, and he too went with folks that had money. He borrowed from them what he could and drank it all up. Thus, these three children of Thompson Brown, grandson of Nancy Fauntleroy Carpenter Shackelford, hoped to inherit four hundred and fifty thousand dollars worth of Uncle Coryndon Carpenter Esq.'s estate. 34

Nancy Brown Johnson's family planted a tobacco crop that year of 1880, and well they did, for that fall Elborough & Dean of London informed attorney J.H. Fleming of Raleigh, who informed attorneys Boyd & Reid of Wentworth, who in turn informed Nancy Bushrod Brown Johnson of Lick Fork that "time was running out and without certified documents proving births and deaths of the four Carpenter

boys, along with documents of all descendants of these men, living and deceased, - nothing could be done." ³⁵

It would be impossible today as it was in 1880 to put together all the requested information. The old letters of Bushrod and Coryndon Carpenter had proven useless and Nancy Johnson returned them to her grandmother's trunk.

Nancy and her husband William continued farming with their children and with their grandchildren. They lived out their lives together in the old house they had moved into at the beginning of the Civil War. Nancy died in 1892 at age seventy-six. William suffered a stroke that affected his speech. His daughter Sarah and his grandson Hugh Johnson (1882-1956) lived with him his few remaining years. 36 On August 3, 1896 William went out to his garden and failing to return, the family went to look for him and found him dead in his turnip patch. He was buried beside his "Lady Nancy." 37

Nancy's daughter Sarah Johnson most likely revealed her mother's inner thoughts about this get rich quick caper when, in 1936 at age ninety, Sarah said, "Mama and I didn't wanta go to England anyhow."

As for Nancy Brown Johnson's nieces and nephew, Mary, Sallie, and Jim Bob Brown, Mary accepted her loss with dignity and attempted to assume responsibility over Sallie and Jim Bob who never recovered from their forfeiture. Sallie took her bereavement out on Jim Bob as if he was solely responsible for the loss of their inheritance. And as their money diminished, Sallie had more of the house work to do. She would wring her hands crying, "These hands were not made for this type of work." Jim Bob just borrowed more money and kept on drinking.³⁸

In 1881 while Mary, Sallie, and their mother Artelia were on an outing, neighbors noticed smoke pouring from the roof of the Brown house. They rushed over but the doors, windows, and the shutters were tightly locked. The house was reduced to ashes. Sallie accused Jim Bob of burning their home for the insurance. This was probably a fantasy of Sallie's imagination as she was always highly imaginative. Nevertheless, she believed it as long as she lived.³⁹

Jim Bob Brown died October 7, 1882 at age thirty-two, a debonair but soused batchelor. 40 They carried him on a wagon across the waters of Lick Fork to the Brown plot in the old Courts Cemetery by the railroad track.

Sallie never forgave her brother for burning their nice home and forcing them back into their old log dwelling, close by Jim Bob's pile of ashes. "He's dead and in hell where he aught to be!" she



Jim Bob Brown about one year before he died in 1882. Photograph Courtesy Hugh Jack Johnson.

exclaimed. From that day on Mary had to calm Sallie whenever Jim Bob's name was mentioned.

In 1885, Thompson Brown's widow Artelia died and the folks who had money, and had loaned it to Jim Bob, now wanted it back. On December 17, 1887 the Brown farm was sold at public outcry (auction) to satisfy Jim Bob's debts. Mary and Sallie were the highest bidders and reclaimed their farm. ¹² In 1900, Nancy Brown Johnson's grandsons, Charlie and Will Johnson, were living with Mary and Sallie working for wages. ¹⁴ In 1903, their father Andrew Johnson bought the Brown place and Mary and Sallie moved to Reidsville. ¹⁴ By 1930 they became insolvent and Mary suffering the frailties of age entered Rockingham County's home for the poor. Sallie, like always, followed Mary. Here though, they were not with folks who had money. Sallie refused to eat in the dining hall where the "peasants" ate. She sent Mary there to eat, and to return, bringing her a plate. ⁴⁵

Mary Brown died at the County Home March 6, 1931 at age seventy-six. She was interred in the county burial ground. 16

Following Mary's death Sallie made periodic visits from the County Home to see her cousin Sarah Johnson, an old maid in her mid-eighties and living with her nephew Hugh Johnson. Sallie and Sarah hashed over by-gone days, reminiscing the hopes and de-

spair of their lost fortune.⁴⁷ And to Sallie, her brother, Jim Bob Brown was still in hell where he aught to be.



Miss Sallie Brown about 1880. Photograph Courtesy Hugh Jack Johnson.

Sallie's health failed rapidly in 1935 and she was brought to Memorial Hospital in Reidsville. Desperately ill she beseeched her cousin Hugh Johnson not to let them take her back to be buried on the poor farm. She died September 7, 1935. Her cousin kept his word and Miss Sallie Brown, age seventy-one, great-granddaughter of Nancy Fauntleroy was laid to rest in the Brown section of the Courts-Burton Cemetery at Stacey, North Carolina. 48

Mary, Sallie, and James (Jim Bob) Brown never married so there are no descendants in the family to lay claim to the Brown portion of Uncle Coryndon Esq.'s fabulous fortune.

However, today this writer, great-great-great-grandson of Nancy Fauntleroy, now and then in a fit of nostalgia takes his calculator in hand, computes the principal plus interest to date and contemplates sending Her Majesty one last request for his share of an inheritance now long overdue.

Deep down though he knows, that of the words of tongue or pen, the saddest are - "It might have been."

Notes

William and Nancy Brown Johnson's tombstones in Courts-Burton Cemetery.

²Caswell County marriage bond of William and Nancy Brown Johnson, dated 1838.

³Personal knowledge from William Johnson to Hugh Johnson, father of the author.

⁴Rockingham County Deeds: Book 3d G, p. 50.

⁵Worksheet of attorneys A.J. Boyd & J.W. Reid at Wentworth, 1880. Original documents and letters of the Carpenter family, along with those of the attorneys involved were microfilmed in the Southern Historical Collection at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill in 1942 by J.G. de Roulhac Hamilton under the heading "Carpenter Papers." Hereinafter referred to as "Carpenter Pappers." Papers now in possession of Colt Johnson, Ruffin, North Carolina.

⁶Virginia Gazette 1768 and Some Emigrants to Virginia, 2nd Edition, p. 20.

⁷Genealogies of Virginia Families, Vol. 3, p. 677.

⁸Boyd & Reid worksheet, 1880.

⁹Tradition handed down through Brown family from Nancy Fauntleroy Carpenter Shackelford.

10 Boyd & Reid worksheet, 1880.

11 Botetourt County, Virginia Wills & Inventories, 1778.

¹²Marriages, Virginia Residents - 1607/1800.

¹³Boyd & Reid worksheet, Tradition from Sally Shackelford Brown.

¹⁴Tradition handed down through Brown Family.

¹⁵Rockingham Deeds: Book C, p. 121.

¹⁶Rockingham Deeds: Book C, p. 121. ¹⁷Rockingham Deeds: Book E, p. 22.

18" Carpenter Papers."

¹⁹Letter to Ann Shackelford in Caswell County from her son Bushrod Carpenter, Mathews County, Va., dated July 6, 1797, and delivered by "Mr. Grant."

²⁰Tradition from Ann Bushrod Carpenter Shackelford to her daughter Sally Shackelford Brown.

²¹"Carpenter Papers", and Brown family tradition. ²²"Carpenter Papers".

²³Item in the Raleigh Observer Newspaper, 1879, and "Carpenter Papers".

²⁴Tradition from Sarah Johnson, daughter of Nancy Bushrod Brown Johnson.

²⁵Caswell County marriage bond, January 12, 1815 of James Brown and Sally Shackelford in State Archives at Raleigh. Rockingham County 1860 Census shows James Brown, age 80 and Sarah (Sally) Brown age 78, living on their son Thompson Brown's farm with the family of William and Nancy Bushrod Brown Johnson. This would be on the Lawsonville to Wentworth Road, known today as the Narrow Gauge Road. James and Sally Shackelford Brown died 1860-70 and were buried in the Courts - Burton Cemetery.

²⁶According to Rockingham 1870 Census, James and Sally Brown were deceased and William and Nancy Brown Johnson had moved one-half mile down the road to the W.P. Watt Plantation.

²⁷"Carpenter Papers" and tradition from Nancy Brown Johnson.

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²⁸In 1880, Nancy Brown Johnson and Mary, Sallie, and Jim Bob Brown were the

only beneficiaries to the Carpenter estate.

²⁹Tradition from Sarah Johnson, daughter of Nancy Bushrod Brown Johnson. Sarah (1845-1939) lived with the author eleven years, 1928-1939. She is buried at Wolf Island Church. Her brother Andrew Johnson (1849-1925), grandfather of the author, is also buried at Wolf Island Church.

³⁰William and Nancy Brown Johnson were known to kin and neighbors alike as "Uncle Billy and Aunt Nancy."

³¹Rockingham Deeds: Book 2dX, p. 141.

³²Rockingham marriage bond of Thompson Brown and Artelia Douglas dated December 10, 1848. In 1852 Thompson Brown bought his homeplace (100 acres), on the Narrow Gauge Road from Robert H. Courts, Deed Book: 4dA, p. 486. In 1873 he bought 42½ acres joining the west side of his homeplace from William Pinkney Watt, Deed Book: 3dE, p. 322. In 1903 these two tracts became the lands of Andrew Johnson, Deed Book: 143, p. 20.

³³Description of Thompson Brown's house and children by Sarah Johnson to author about 1937, and by letter to the author from Mrs. Josie Stewart DeLancey, age 92, of Chapel Hill, North Carolina, dated December 14, 1986.

³⁴Traditon from Sarah Johnson to the author about 1937.

³⁵Letter from Elborough & Dean, London, to Attorney J.H. Fleming of Raleigh, North Carolina, dated November 11, 1880.

³⁶Personal knowledge of Hugh Johnson, father of author.

37 Reidsville Weekly Review, August 7, 1896.

³⁸Tradition from Sarah Johnson to the author about 1937.

³⁹Sarah Johnson stated the Brown house burned the year after the lawyers failed to collect the Brown children's inheritance. This could have prompted Sallie to think that her brother burned their home.

40 Rockingham Deeds: Book 4dE, p. 505.

⁴¹Miss Sallie Brown declared this all her life. The author as a boy heard her make this remark. In 1968 the author with a metal detector found the shutter hinges at the Brown home site.

⁴²Rockingham Deeds: Book 4dE, p. 505.

⁴³1900 Rockingham Census. Charlie Johnson (1884-1908) and Will Johnson (1880-1915) are buried at Wolf Island Church.

44 Rockingham Deeds: Book 143, p. 20.

⁴⁵Personal knowledge of Hugh Johnson, father of author.

⁴⁶Rockingham County Death Certificate of Miss Mary Bell Brown.

⁴⁷Personal knowledge of the author.

⁴⁸Rockingham County Death Certificate of Miss Sally Brown, and personal knowledge of the author who, at eleven years of age, attended Miss Brown's funeral.

The John Bethell Letter - 1839

Transcribed and Notes

by

Robert W. Carter, Jr.

Introduction

In August 1986 the Rockingham County Historical Society received a copy of a letter written by John Bethell in 1839. Bethell was a resident of De Soto County, Mississippi when he wrote the letter to his nephews and niece who lived near Lawsonville in eastern Rockingham County.

Mrs. Josephine Johnstone Slemp of Wytheville, Virginia who owns the original letter enclosed a note with the letter saying: "My grandfather (Alfred Moore Johnston) had this letter with him when he came to Virginia from North Carolina. My grandfather was a son of Alfred Bethell Johnston who married Judith Taylor ca. 1842 and grandson of Thomas and Jane Bethell Johnston of Caswell County."

John Bethell was born ca. 1770² and was a son of Captain William Bethell (1744-1804) who served as a captain in the Guilford County Militia during the Revolutionary War. After the war William Bethell served as a county justice: in the North Carolina Legislature; as a delegate to the Constitutional Conventions; and as Clerk of the Rockingham County Court. Bethell, who was one of the largest land owners in Rockingham County, married Nancy Stewart Stubblefield, the daughter of Robert and Susannah Carter Stubblefield.³

John Bethell married Martha Smith, the daughter of Drury and Martha Challis Smith. John inherited a 702 acre plantation from his father's estate. His land was in eastern Rockingham County on Lick Fork Creek. He was a progressive planter as his name appears on a petition to form an Agricultural Society in Rockingham County during the year 1825.

Evidently John Bethell's children joined in the mass migration from this region during the 1830s. On March 17, 1837 he sold his

land on Lick Fork Creek⁷ and moved to De Soto County, Mississippi where several of his sons had settled.

While John highly praises the fertile soil of De Soto County, within a few years he moved across the state line to Shelby County, Tennessee and settled in Memphis. After several members of the family died of Yellow Fever in Memphis, he decided to move to Dallas County, Arkansas. He purchased land there and built a home in Tulip Ridge. He died on a river boat in 1845 while on a trip to New Orleans to buy furniture for his new home in Arkansas and was buried in the American Cemetery in New Orleans."

John Bethell had written a will in June, 1843 while living in Memphis. His children were: Dr. William P. Bethell; John M. Bethell; Martha Bethell; Peyton E. Bethell; Susan Bethell; Jane Bethell; Nancy Bethell; Jethro Bethell; and Alfred Bethell.

John Bethell's letter is written to his nephews and niece. They were the children of Thomas Johnston and Jane Bethell Johnston who was John's sister. 10 The nephew A. B. J. was Alfred Bethell Johnston, who became a saddler by trade and settled in Stokes County, North Carolina. Mrs. Slemp who sent the letter to the Society is a great-granddaughter of A.B. Johnston. Richard B. Johnston, (1801-1858), 12 brother of Alfred B., owned a large tract of land between Lick Fork Primitive Baptist Church and Ruffin. 13 His home is now owned by members of the Stokes family. He left numerous descendants in the area. The other Johnston brother, Lancelot, (1800-1867)14 was named after his grandfather. Dr. Lancelot Johnston, 15 who lived in Caswell County. The younger Lancelot settled in Rockingham County on the east side of Hogan's Creek a short distance from the Caswell County line. He also has descendants in the area. Their sister, Nancy B. Johnston, married Captain Joel Motley in 1827.16 This family moved to Hillsville, Virginia but returned to Rockingham County sometime after Nancy's death in 1858. She also has descendants in the area. The other nephew to whom the letter was addressed appears to be Samuel Bethell, 17 a son of William Bethell, Jr. and Mary Watt Bethell. Little information is available on Samuel who may have moved south. The original grammar and spelling of the letter has been retained.

THE BETHELL LETTER

Desoto County, Miss. August 24, 1839

To A.B.J., Richard B. Johnston, Lancelot Johnston, Samuel Bethell, Capt. Motley and Family. I have once more commened writing to you all but I must confess I am hurtless for I never have received a letter from any of you except A.B. Johnston but I am compld by the ties of nature to write to you and to show you that I have not forgot you all if you have me. I can inform you this leaves my Family in good Health and hope when this reaches you it will find you all enjoying good health.

William Bethell's¹⁸ family is Well except himself. He has been quite sick but (is) getting better. Peyton¹⁹ and his family is well. Dudly Stokes²⁰ and family is well and all the connection as far as I Know is well. The people in this section of Country is Generally well. It has been almost two years since I have been here and I have never had the first Phisian in my family yet.

I can inform you times is florishing here, every thing alive. Such crops of Corn and cotton none of you ever saw. Cotton is as high as a mans head on a Horse. You would have to part my corn to get through it. This is the first year that there is been a Tryal on Cotton of any importance owing to not having cleared Land.

I must confess I am Supprized at Capt. Motley, Richard B. Johnston and A.B. Johnston for Staying in that Old Country. Capt. Motley you and Richard has families and in the Name of God what can you promise them. I Know you can both leave there but is there any Land that would not bring them to poverty to give them. By and by they will grow up and if they have any interprise they will not Stay there. They will begin one after another to leave you. Then you will begin to fell what I have felt. Then you must Either brake up and follow them or Suffer the pain and uneaseness of Seeing them Squander off and then if you follow them you will be two old to do much for yourself or them. Now is the time while you are able to do Something and your children young. Bring them here and let them Grow up with the Country. This certainly is the most deserable Country I ever See. The rich Land, the Greate Convenance here is a chance for a Man. Large fields Open for any Kind of specutation. If you wish to put up Tobacco here you could have some incrouagement for doing so. You can buy Tobacco bring it down the river. You can buy it for \$3. first rate and Manufacture21 it and sell it by the Box for 50¢ to One dollar. If you wish to farm it here you can make from 1000 to 1500 lbs Cotton to the Acre, from 8 to 10 Barrels of Corn and you can raise as many Hogs and Cattle as you please.

Since I came here I have raised upwards of 100 head of hogs. I can Kill 50 fine Porks now. William Bethell has about 300 head he can Kill this fall, upwards of 100 fine Ewes. Peyton has a fine stock of hogs. This Country Flows with milk and Butter. If you will come I will promise you to give you all as much butter as you can eat and I Know none of you ever had as much at one time as you could eat without you are more luckly than I was there.

Capt. Motley you aught to mind your wife and come to a New Country as She wants you. She Knows how much better it would be for her children. You aught not to be so chicken Harted. There is the most Turkeys, more chickens, more fat pigs, more fine Fish here than any place you ever see in your life.

Richard Johnston what Keeps you. Your Answer is land is Two High at \$6. Recollect What you gave Samuel Bethell per acre for a little slepe of crawfish low grounds. When it rains it overflows. When it don't rain make nothing. Now the poorest upland in this Country is much richer and will make more corn to the acre than the best Spot in your low grounds. I can buy Land here now at \$5. that will bring 8 Barrels of corn and 1000 lbs of Cotton to the acre and no overflowing. I Know Susan never wants to raise her children in Lick Fork Low grounds²² if you could See the crops here now. You never would rest untell you Sold and came here. Don't stay there for god Sake, your Sake and Your Wife and Childrens Sake.

Now I Know it is not worth while to say any thing to Lotty, ²³ he cannot come. Thomas Powell will not come to be Overseer for him and more than that a King never aught to Forsake his subjects. ²¹ I Know one half of them would perish if he was to leave them.

Alfred What Keeps you there? "I declar Uncle John, I don't Know. I was a thinking I had better go to Some new Country but then I was also thinking if I went to that Country I should forget how to play the Thimbles and the little Joker. I am afraid no body there knowns about it and is two respectable to play that game and then I should not Know what to do to have some fun."

Samuel, What Keeps you there? "My Uncle Johnny, I am afraid there is no tobacco there and as I am going to Marry I had rather stay here than go there When I could not make corn and meat to support us and I cannot leave Mammas House to go away there." 25

I recollect I ask William P. Brown 26 what made him Keep Massey. 27 He said to Steel corn for him. Tell William he can come here now with

all speed. Massey is in this Country and his Fingers all in a motion. He could not steel more than a Basket full there, he can steel a Bag full here. Tell William if he will come here I will cure him of the Gout. I will give no meat but venison and he must kill it-

You may all say the excuses I have made for you is not altogether so but for your lives you cannot make any better. I confess it is Some trouble for a Man and family to brake up and move but he gets so well paid for his Trouble but what incourgement is there for a young Man who has but little property and particular a tradesman. Here he can get highest prices and more than he can do. A small piece of Land here will answer. 50 acres of Land here open will bring as much as 150 acres there of your best Land and when you clear it. It will last and age the older it gets the better for Cotton, Wheat and Oats. There is more wheat made in the District this year than ever you Knew. I am told there is thousands of Bushels for sale at 37¢ per Bushel. Those that have made wheat here this year made from 25 to 40 Bushels to the acre. We can have plenty of Wheat Brought to us at 50¢ Bushel. We have the best Flower here I ever saw, brought from Ohio and Indiana & C.

Laving all Jokes aside I wish you all would move to this Country. If I did not think it would be to your advantage greately I would not adise you. I know much the same Industry that you use there you could get rich here. This is the fall to move. Corn and meat plenty and cheap and when you get scarce of Bacon you could Kill a fat vinison at your Lesure Hours - the other evening I told Munroe to Kill some Squarrels. He started but went after Deer. He did not go 1/2 mile from the House. He was gone about 1 Hour. He came back and said he wanted some of the negroes to go with him. I ask him what for, he said he had Killed 2 Large Bucks. They went after them and they was as large as I ever see. They wayed 300 lbs neet. One of them had 16 points up a Beam. They was as fat as you ever see a mutton. Munroe said he would quit, he never expected to do so again. But William frequently Kills 3 a day. They are as fat as muttons. You may go any day and get as many fish as you can bring home weiging 10 lbs. to 180 lbs.

This is the Greatest place for watermelons you ever see. Ellis from Danville was at my House yestoday and see me cut open plenty that weiged from 40 to 60 pounds. Plenty in the Neighborhood weiging 60 to 75 lbs. I have mush melons as much as I can almost sholder.

I am going to start Munroe²⁸ in a few days to Kentucky to Salem

School at Paris. Munroe bids for to be large. He throws down every body big and little. There could be a greate deal bet on him that he could through down any person of his age in the State. Ellis will be in Danville in a few weeks. He Saw him Rassel.

My Family joins me in love to you. Alfred if none of the others don't come you come and do Something for yourself.

Jno. Bethell

Addressed: Mr. Alfred B. Johnston Lawsons Store²⁹ Rockingham County North Carolina

Post marked August 27, Hernando,³⁰ Miss.

Notes

¹Letter from Josephine Johnstone Slemp, 410 South 9th Street, Wytheville, Virginia, 24382 to The Rockingham County Historical Society dated August 6, 1986.

²Undated letters from John P. Bethell of Des Arc, Arkansas to Miss Nancy Withers, Wentworth, North Carolina, now in possession of Francis I. Anderson, Greensboro, North Carolina. John P. Bethell was a great-great grandson of John Bethell who wrote the letter in 1839. He spent several years researching the Bethell Family during the 1970's.

³The Heritage of Rockingham County, North Carolina, (Winston-Salem: Hunter Publishing Company, 1983), p. 164. Hereinafter cited as The Heritage of Rockingham County.

¹Rockingham County Deed Book O, p. 79. This deed, dated November 6, 1810, states that Martha "Patsey" Smith Bethell was a daughter of Drury and Martha Challis Smith.

⁵Rockingham County Deed Book 2d H, p. 297.

⁶The agricultural petition dated 1825 is in the Special Collection Room, Rockingham Community College, Wentworth, North Carolina.

⁷Rockingham County Deed Book 2d H, p. 297.

⁸Letters from John P. Bethell of Des Arc, Arkansas to Miss Nancy Withers.

⁹Ibid.

¹⁰The Heritage of Caswell County, North Carolina, (Winston-Salem: Hunter Publishing Company, 1985), p. 314. Hereinafter cited as The Heritage of Caswell County.

11 Letters from Josephine Johnstone Slemp dated August 6, 1986.

12 The Heritage of Caswell County, p. 314.

¹³Rockingham County Deed Book 2d K. p. 271.

The John Bethell Letter - 1839

¹³Lancelot Johnston's tombstone is in Lick Fork Primitive Baptist Church Cemetery.
See Rockingham County Historical Society Newsletter, September, 1981. Also see Marjorie Craig, Family Records of Henrietta Alberta Ratliffe and Jasper Newton Craig, (Reidsville, North Carolina: Privately printed, 1955). Lancelot Johnston married Matilda Simpson. Her sister, Susan married Lancelot's brother, Richard B. Johnston.

¹⁵Dr. Lancelot Johnston (1748-1832) was a native of Ireland who emigrated to America and served as a surgeon during the Revolutionary War. He settled in Caswell County and died there. See The Heritage of Caswell County, p. 312.

¹⁶Capatain Joel Motley was born April 6, 1796 and died June 7, 1877. He is buried in the Lick Fork Church Cemetery. The Heritage of Rockingham County, p. 445.

¹⁷Samuel Bethell had moved from the Rockingham County area by August 1839, when Calvin Graves sold by power of attorney, his interest in a tract of land owned by his father William Bethell, (Jr.). Rockingham County Deed Book 2d K, p. 271.

¹⁸According to letters of John P. Bethell this was William Pinckney Bethell who was a son of John and grandson of Captain William Bethell. He became a Doctor and practiced medicine in Tulip Ridge, Arkansas. Born in 1810, he married Elizabeth Brown a native of Caswell County, North Carolina on September 21, 1831. He died in 1867.

¹⁹Peyton Bethell, son of John, also moved from De Soto County to Arkansas and became the first sheriff of Dallas County.

²⁰Dudly Stokes married Frances W. Bethell (daughter of John) in February 1837 while still living in Rockingham County. The Stokes moved with the Bethells to De Soto County, Mississippi.

²¹At this time many Rockingham County Tobacco manufacturers were peddling plug chewing tobacco in the states of Mississippi, Alabama, South Carolina and Georgia.

²²During this period the rich low grounds along the creeks and rivers of Rockingham County were much prized for the production of corn which was the staple of life for both man and livestock.

23. Lotty" was a nickname for Lacelot Johnston.

This seems to indicate that Johnston was a widely known and popular person.

²⁵It appears that Samuel was the only one of John's nephews who moved south. He was a son of Gen. William Bethell, (Jr.) who died in Natchez, Mississippi in 1834.

²⁶William P. Brown probably lived in Caswell County, North Carolina. Dr. W.P. Bethell (son of John) married Elizabeth Brown, a native of Caswell County in 1831. She was a relative of William P. Brown. Several members of the Brown Family moved from Caswell County to Tulip Ridge, Arkansas and later emigrated on to Texas.

Massey was a slave owned by William P. Brown.

²⁸Munroe was likely a grandson of John Bethell.

²⁹A post office was opened at Lawson's Store in eastern Rockingham County on April 2, 1830. In 1848 the name was changed to Lawsonville and the post office was discontinued in 1903.

³⁰Hernando is the county seat of De Soto County, Mississippi.

EXPERIENCES IN A YANKEE PRISON

by

J.M. Wilson

Editor's note: J.M. Wilson, 1 a Confederate veteran, of Reidsville, North Carolina wrote the following letter to the editor of The Reidsville Review on January 2, 1913. It was published in The Review on January 3, 1913. According to Jordan's North Carolina Troops, 1861-1865, A Roster, Volume V, Wilson enlisted in Rockingham County in Company G, 14th Regiment at age 21 on August 10, 1861. He was captured at Winchester, Virginia on September 19, 1864 and confined at Point Lookout, Maryland until paroled and transferred to Boulware's Warf, James River, Virginia, where he was received March 18, 1865 for exchange. (Civil War research by James R. Meador).

THE LETTER

"I am a Confederate soldier; went to the front in 1861, and came back in '65; was a member of Co. G. 14th Regiment, North Carolina troops and was a prisoner of war six months, and if you will allow me space I will give you my experience as a prisoner. On the 19th day of September, 1864, I was captured at Winchester, Va.; was carried back in rear of the battlefield and spent the night. The next day I was carried back to the town of Winchester with many others where we were kept two or three days and nights. All we got to eat was one pound of green beef and six hard-tacks. We then left Winchester for Harper's Ferry, passing through Charlestown, where John Brown was hanged. We reached Harper's Ferry late in the evening and there took the cars (train) for Baltimore, Md. We then marched through that beautiful city to the boat-landing, where we took a boat down the Chesapeake Bay to our destination, which was Point Lookout. There we were lined up and divested of everything except our clothes we had on. Then they let us through the gate. The camp was laid off in town style, enclosed with a closed plank fence 15 feet high with a platform on top for the guards to walk, situated right on the

bay. There was a ditch on the inside of the fence which was called the "dead line." If you crossed that ditch between the gates that lead out to the bay you were liable to be shot.

We spent the winter of '64 in cloth tents which were very cold. We were laid off in companies - about 100 men to company, and about 20 tents for each company - so we made our brick and dried them in the sun and built our chimneys. Well, how much wood do you suppose we got? Orders came in to send two men from each company to get wood. They had to go nearly a mile. That was all we got for the 20 tents for the winter, so our chimneys were not of much service to us that winter. Some of our feet were badly frosted.

We were guarded by black troops and they were very rough to the Southern prisoners. They kept a heavy guard in the camp every night. Sometimes they would see a prisoner out on the street at night and would make the poor devil get down on his feet and hands and ride him as a horse. Sometimes they would make the prisoner stand upon a barrel with the head out. You can imagine how that would feel to be out on a cold night barefooted and stand on a barrel with the head out.

We had a specified time to put out the light and stop talking and retire. If you disobeyed that order you were liable to be shot. They would shoot right in the tent. Finally they got so rough they had to be taken out and white guards put in the camp in their stead.

They fed us on vegetable soup, cod fish and loaf bread, and while we did not overload our stomachs, none died from hunger. The water was very bad, full of copperas.² It liked to have ruined our teeth.

We were scarce of clothes, and also blankets, but you know a rebel soldier was hard to turn down, so every Sunday morning we had to form our company and answer to roll call and ordered to carry out all we had, and if you lacked coat, pants, shoes or blankets, they would give you what you needed, so that is the way we got blankets. I, for one, would hide mine and go out and get one. When I was paroled on March 18th, 1865, I left four big heavy U.S. blankets buried in my tent.

We said farewell to old Point Lookout the 19th day of March, 1865, and landed in Richmond on the morning of the 20th of March, and got a parole furlough for 30 days.

I was at home when the gallant R.E. Lee said, "Boys, we are not whipped, but overpowered." I am thankful I'm one of his followers that has been spared to speak of the by-gone days.

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NOTES

¹J.M. Wilson was born January 1, 1840, the son of William and Matilda Rice Wilson. While a resident of Reidsville, he was employed in one of the local tobacco factories. He died July 4, 1918 and was buried in the Mt. Carmel Methodist Church Cemetery. Information from the Rockingham County Death Records for 1918.

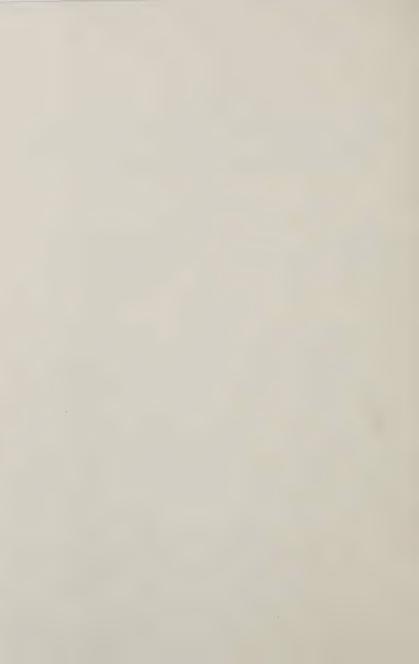
²Copperas or copper water (ferrous sulfate) is a green crystalline compound long used to suppress sexual desire in prison populations.

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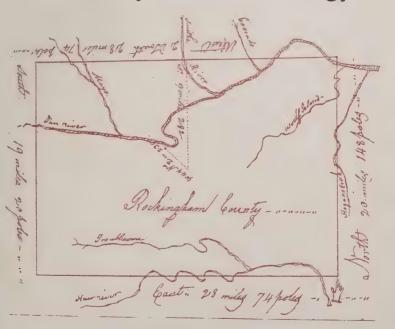
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The Journal of Rockingham County History and Genealogy



The Rockingham County Historical Society, Inc.

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Editorial Policy

The publication committee is interested in receiving articles on the history and genealogical source materials of Rockingham County and the adjacent area. The historical articles must be well written and thoroughly documented. Genealogical articles should consist of previously unpublished primary source materials pertaining to Rockingham County, such as abstract of local records and edited diaries, letters, or church records. Papers on family history should not be submitted. All copy, including footnotes, should be typed double-space. Articles and correspondence should be sent to the editor. Robert W. Carter, Jr., Route 2, Box 762, Reidsville, N.C. 27320.

Cover Illustration

The earliest known map of Rockingham County was drawn in November, 1786 by Abraham Philips. Philips, who was county Surveyor, had been directed by "The Commissioners to erect Publick Buildings" to designate the center of the county. His survey located this point at what became the county seat, Wentworth. In 1787 the courthouse was built at the site. The map was found in the North Carolina General Assembly Session Records, November 1786-January 1787, Box 4. Map courtesy Betty J. Baker and the North Carolina State Archives, Raleigh, North Carolina.

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ABRAHAM PHILIPS, "A Journal of our March"

edited by

Lindley S. Butler

Introduction

Abraham Philips was in many respects the most important "founding father" of Rockingham County. In his many roles as a Revolutionary soldier, a county justice for forty years, a Commoner, a state Senator, a delegate to the North Carolina Federal Constitution ratification conventions, a militia general, and a county surveyor; Abraham Philips was a key figure in the establishment of the county and was at the center of the county's early political leadership.

Philips was born 25 June 1755 and settled in northern Guilford County (present Rockingham) by 1779 on Great Rockhouse Creek. His home, one of the few extant eighteenth-century structures in the county, has been much modified but still retains some of its original features. He eventually amassed a plantation of seven hundred acres and by 1830 held a total of thirty-one slaves. In addition to his plantation Philips owned eight hundred acres in other tracts in the county, and in 1789 he received fifteen hundred acres on the Big Hatcher River in the future state of Tennessee for his Revolutionary service. On 9 December 1784 Philips married Cynthia Lanier, who was born 18 October 1761 and was the daughter of James Lanier. Abraham and Cynthia had six children – Mary (Polly) born 1785, Pleasant born 1787, Charles born 1790, Elizabeth born 1792, Isaac born 1794, and James born 1797.

From his papers and journal two periods of Revolutionary service can be documented for Philips. In March 1781 when General Nathanael Greene's army was encamped nearby at the Troublesome Creek Ironworks, Philips was a guide and scout for Colonel William Washington's cavalry. In the fall of 1781 the county militia sent troops of mounted infantry to the militia force being raised by General Griffith Rutherford for the purpose of riding the state of the British force that remained in Wilmington. Philips was a captain in command of a company of mounted men and in his journal recorded five actions in which he participated. After the war he continued as a

militia officer, rising to the rank of colonel of the county regiment by November 1810. He was elected brigadier general of the Fourth Division in May 1811 and served until his resignation in 1817. He was the first militia general to be elected from the county.

By February 1783 Philips had been appointed Deputy Surveyor of Guilford County. He was named a commissioner in the legislative act of December 1785 that established Rockingham County. The commission was charged with the responsibility of surveying the line that would divide Guilford County in half—thereby creating Rockingham. Philips, one of the original county justices, was elected surveyor for Rockingham County at the first court session. The earliest surviving map of the county which locates the county seat at the center was done by Philips. He also surveyed the plats for the earliest towns in Rockingham County — Leaksville (1795) and Wentworth (1799).

Four decades of service on the county court involved Philips in a variety of commissions for development of the county and its public buildings. Among his more important tasks were the promotion of the county seat at Wentworth, oversight of construction of the courthouse and jail, and the establishment of the county poorhouse. In 1807 he was elected chairman of the county court.³

Philips participated in state politics for over twenty-five years. His political beliefs, molded by the Revolution, encompassed suspicion of a centralized government, and Philips with his colleagues in the county delegations to both state ratification conventions embraced Anti-Federalism and opposed the Federal Constitution. He was elected to three terms in the House of Commons in 1788-1790 and nine terms in the State Senate in the period 1797-1814. He became a Jacksonian Democrat, serving as a Presidential Elector in 1828.

Following his death on 23 March 1836, Philips was buried near home. He left the plantation to his wife, but shortly thereafter Cynthia moved to live with her son in Russell County, Alabama. Cynthia Philips died in Alabama 3 February 1837. The Rockingham County home place was sold to George Purcell and has descended in that family.

The journal of Abraham Philips must have been prepared soon after his service in the Revolution. His Revolutionary experiences were described on a single sheet which contains a brief summary of his 1781 service and a twenty page half-sheet booklet that describes in detail the Wilmington campaign. In addition there is a sixteen

page half-sheet ledger containing business records and accounts for 1782-1783 that does not relate to his Revolutionary service. According to the correspondence of his children, who unsuccessfully attempted to secure a pension for his service, the journal was sent to the Pension Bureau in Washington in 1853. At some point the journal was separated from the pension application which is in the National Archives and ended up in the miscellaneous Revolutionary manuscripts of the Library of Congress. The editor discovered the journal from an incorrect description published in a catalog of the Revolutionary papers in 1975. In the catalog entry Philips is identified as a school teacher of Hillsborough who served in the Continental Army. Apparently the researcher only superficially perused the ledger.

The journal is a poorly preserved, badly-faded, hand written manuscript. It is significant because it is one of only two contemporary descriptions of Rutherford's Wilmington campaign. The other narrative, written by Joseph Graham who also was a cavalry officer, has been known from its origin and was published in 1917 in the Archibald D. Murphey papers. Although the Philips and Graham narratives differ in detail, they essentially substantiate each other. The Wilmington campaign, which was the last important military engagement of the war in North Carolina, forced the British evacuation of Wilmington, removing the final enemy troops from the state. Because so little has been known about it the events around Wilmington have largely been ignored by historians. The journal of Abraham Philips contributes significantly to our knowledge of an important episode in North Carolina's Revolutionary history. The laconic straightforward narrative of Abraham Philips offers us a rare glimpse into the activities of the Revolutionary militia, and should spark renewed interest in this last military campaign of the Revolution in North Carolina.

The Summary Narrative and the Journal

This edition is partly based on an incomplete transcription by W. Ingram Philips, who is descended from Abraham Philips. The editor is grateful for his initial work on the manuscript. The journal is located in the Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C., which has granted permission for this publication of these documents. The original grammar and spelling of the journal have been retained.

We wight Every Reason Circumstance to a Quilous The all in Vain finding nothing but the Horse Deliver us which Delates warmby arred Mayor Tillashed told him that Justin Shines nobly in our favoris that if Nothing Could Dervale but to Olepeal The would hack Engething Sus ber thim deling under such an unjust mmand, Cathy lineing Eun attempt budgerated , Lucy ho Butreatt back we then march & wethout any Difunty only hund us dome Imale time at a bridge, after all English Jafo lol Martin Marjox Gollnepur ? or Seprately on to Colory Lines then on I Sw. Started about allows one travelle Im

A page from the Journal of Abraham Philips. Reproduced courtesy Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

On that day Erly in the morning-I was as[ked] with some men to go-and Bring in some arms Wanting with some other things-for the

use of the Troops-after the Battle General Greene Retreated to take Iron Works and I went to him-he ordered me to go to Colo Washington' who then was stationed then within One mile of my house-when I went to Colo Washington he said as I was well Informed of this Section of Country-I must quit the servis as Captain of my Company and stay with him as a guide to him and his Cavalry while in this Sectionand I did so-Until the 28th March and passed him on about 3 or 4 miles East of Guilford Court house [-] the British had formed their Retreat from the Court House there. We met Colo John Paisley² who lived in that section—I then told Colo Washington—that I was gitting from my acquaintance of Roads—and that Colo Paisley... that Section Could Instruct him Better that I Could and that he was a safe hand to Rely on ... Then and there-I quit that Campaign-

25th September 1781-----

I again commenced our Campaign as a Captain in the militia to Wilmington. James Martin Colo.³ Under the Command Genl Griffith Rutherford.⁴ after having some five schrimages with the Torys-we marched to Wilmington... British offcir from there Took Repossession of the Town again and Loaded some wagons with Salt and other things and Returned home-on the 2th day of December 1781-this Tour finished-my services in the Revolutionary War-say from 25th day of September to the 2d day of December-1781-

[1]

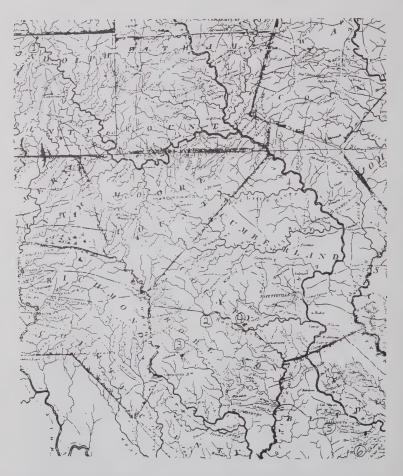
Guilford County NC

A Journal of our March

My Company joined Camp on...Continued in Camp at...then marched Down to Mendenhalls Mill Remarkable only we made the Mill make us a run on Sunday 29th then Decamped and Marched to the head of Little River of... there one day waiting a Re-enforcement from Surry ... Commanded by Captain ... then October 1st we Decamped and marched to Old Allens there found his two Riffles and ... 15th... hid in a Swamp found and made ... the Surry Troops. then Decamped marched to Join General Rutherford but not being informed ... his Route ... about 10 miles wrong ... Camped ... Crawfords on the 2 Oct ... [several lines illegible]

[2]

Then on the 6th camped on Crawford's road whare Col. Wade 6 was defeated a verry wild night an express from Genl Rutherford about



The Price-Strother Map of North Carolina in 1808. This area of the map locates several points mentioned in Abraham Philips' journal. Number one is Mendenhall's Mill; number two is Rock Fish Creek; number three is McFall's Mill; number four is Stewarts; number five is Elizabeth Town; and number six is Hugh Waddells. Map courtesy North Carolina State Archives, Raleigh, North Carolina.

10 oclock at night with pressing Orders to Join him amediately. Informing that the torys was trying to Intercept the Jountion between him and General Butler⁷ and that it was more than probable we should fall under ther hands our party then only amounting to 188 exclusive of our Dragoons about 30 which was not in Camp We amediately ordered out all our fires Lay on our lines until morning Then by a good pilate made our march. 8 [?] Miles through the woods to Join Rutherford & Butler at McClains on Rockfish Creek⁸ who was about Twelve Hundred Strong which was on the 7th Oct. on the 8th we Decamped and near marched for Niel McFalls Mill on the Raft Swamp⁹ about three miles from our Camp found two Spyes within our lines Took them One Spy lated us through the ... For there Incampment which was about 200.

[3]

was said to be of them. About Six miles from Our Incampment. [Mill] Col.McNeal¹⁰ with 44 Torys [Dismounting] and Discovering our March and Number of Genl Butler's Infantry advanced guards marched in front amediately advanced foreward the mounted infantry which amediately Dispersed Took 12 Dismounted several men when amediately about 100 Dragoons and two [hun] Mounted Infantry persued took their trail Ruch on for there encampment which was about ... miles from there Late in the Evening of the 8th Came to there Camp who ware much Confused by our Speedy march and a certain amount of our Killing 2 wounding 4 and taking their three or four prisoners our Dragoons Charged upon them made such a Vigorous push they amediately Broak and made for the Swamp We Killed 12 dead on the ground Dismounted about 30 without any Damage¹¹ on the 9th we lay at Neil McFalls Mill on the Tenth we Decamped Marched South four Miles to Johnstons Genl Butlers Brigade left us marched the East Side Raft Swamp we marched on the 12 Down the raft South side of Black Swamp¹² where we Lay one Day at the windows Nothing Remarkable only found ... in the

[4]

In the swamp on the 12th also Stayed in Camp on the 13th. Then on the 14th we marched about 4 miles to the Raft Swamp to a bridge where the torys had broke the Bridge Tho we Soon lade it again Crossed over without Dificulty then marched Down the North Side of Raft Swamp about three miles halted in order to Camp when a party of the Horse Rode Down about one mile after milk a Sargeant and Six men. Eight torys formed behind a House while 4 women

Came in the yard to a muse them. They fired upon our men Killed the Sgt. 13 and wounded one other Slightly on the hand Wounded Two horses made there retreate good in the Swamp-on the 15th 14 Genl Rutherford gave Orders to Drive the Swamp whare we was told was a Number posted-Genl Rutherford with the Ligte Horse Col. Loften & Col. Ervin 15 Regiments marched up to the Bridge the Horse flanked Down & the foot Drove the Swamp Col Martin & Col McDowell 16

[5]

With their Regmts Marched Down fore miles from Camp where there orders was to take the swamp and Drive up untill they mett the Genls party to Discover and Disperse the torys if possible. We also burned Two Dwelling Houses. They Drove without any Interruption only found Some trifling plunder then on the 16th Decamped and marched almost North East to a Creek called Saddletree17 nothing there Remarkable Marched on the morning of the 17th the Nearest and best Rout into the Road Leading To Elizabeth Town¹⁸ By that time Came into the Inhabitance of some good Whigs 4 familys fell in with our troops and mooved until they should find apart more Safe for them on the 18th we was forced to mend the Bridge mounted a fatigue of 100 men to mend where the torys had burnt & in order to hinder our march as they ware well satisfied we was on persuite of them, we marched Ten miles and Camped at Darrdnes on Cape Fare Six miles West of Elizabeth Town there was much frustrated by a Scare that our Horses got in the Night by some Ill Designing.

[6]

Dismounted Infantry however the Greatest part we found Decamped about 12 oclock on the 19th Marched through the Town Two Miles to the plantation Whare Genl Waddle¹⁹ formarly lived. Then on the 20th Marched South East about 2 miles to Majour Taylor there Incamped untill Monday Morning on Sunday His Excellency Governour Martin²⁰ with his life Guard Came into Camp on Same day Came the Disagreeable Express Certifying the Death of the Brave Col Mabin²¹ also Information that Major O'Neal²² has defeated the notorious Col Fanning²³ and his party of torys. 22d---thence Decamped and Marched South East about Six miles To the brown Swamp²⁴ Nothing Remarkable 23d then Decamped marched over the Brown Swamp to Baldens where our Horse Joined us after a Command about a week then on the 24th we Stayed there the 25th

Detached of Col Smith²⁵ with his Dragoons and Infantry to the brick.

[7]

The 29th [This page is torn diagonally leaving about one third of the original.]

Eight miles to ...

Mooved and has ...

on the East side of the ...

the on the 30th Decamped ...

a party came from Col Smiths with ...

four torys which was taken within half a mile ...

Brick House²⁶ on Saturday killed about 12 men ...

Captain Simmons²⁷ with his Dragoons they surrounded the house but having no opportunity and the Enemy Not firing on them They Drew off about fore mile and lay when the accounts Came from there—& on Sunday we also are told that three hundred of the Enemy

[8]

[The reverse of the diagonally torn page.]

... about 300 men

... River fired at all

... with the loss of only one man

... of the ...

... on the 4th Genl Rutherford with his Guard went to View the Enemy Brought us no further accounts then only we had took some Boates and Some Nigros with Coffee and Sugar &c.—

[9]

Then on the 5th about Ten o clock we Received the Joy and happy News of the fall of Cornwallis then amiadiately Marched Down to the River formed in the old field the Two Brigades into four lines the Horse the rare line formed a platoon of Twenty in front of the lines fired thirteen Rounds then amediately fired three proper Rounds of the whole troop and Three Chears Distinctly between evry fire and so Concluded the Evening with nith a great Deal of Joy then on the 6th Detached Colo McDowell with his party to Genl Butler who is to Cross the Cape Fear River from a Jountion with Colo Smith of the Legion & Infantry to intersept Craigs²⁸ march Instantly if he should attempt it then on the Seventh Marched Northwest about 8 miles to the plantation of one Guilford Incamped there then on the 8th myself was ordered on a Command under a Major Hoge with one Hundred

men and Marched Dew to our old Incampment & there passed the Evenin on Verry happily on good Brandy, then on the 9th was busy Mounting a Cannon about 2 o clock Came to Ro gallies ²⁹ Mounted our piquates fired at them they returned a Toleable fire from the Vessels tho the firing proved abortive i believe Both sides-

[10]

we looking upon our Situation something on Safe Decamped Marched to head Quarters which had moved about 6 miles North East to a Mill whare we had some flour to the amount of Sixty Bushels procured for us. Then on the 10th Decamped marched almost Due west for a Bout 14 miles to Henrys widdow mores Creek then on 11th was a wett day. Continued in our Quarters untill 12th then marched about 10 miles Nearly North to the plantation of Mr James then on the 13th Decamped Marched Early in the Morning of the 13th-- on our trail North East about 10 miles to Jones farm then on the 14th we lay in Camp about 12 o clock Rcd. Express that thel British had decamped the Bridge and burnt it also avacuated Wilmington at 9 o clock on the said day when amediately the Genl Detached at the Horse to the town and also gave orders for the troops to march on the 15th at 6 oclock accordingly we marched Down to Clatens incamped on our old ground then on the 16th all the prisoners was ordered Down to Wilmington under a strong guard of 100 men

[11]

Commanded by 2 Captains Col Martin, Major Gillaspie³⁰ and some more officers & myself Went to town which was well s... with Rum Wine Ginn & Salt we spent the Evening Verry agreeable on Liquors of all most Evry Sort when the same time Lay of the British Vessels about three miles below town Then the 17th about 12 oclock tide being verry hig she set sail and went off about 2 oclock Some officrs and myself went to Camp then on the 18th Sunday we lay at the old camp—then on Monday 19th Captain Humphries ³¹ & Some other officers and myself Left the Troops in Camp Rode Down to the North East River there mett Major Gillaspie who then Just Landed with Six Barrels of good Salt we amediately unloaded the Boate amediately Loaded her again with beef Capt Humphries Capt Mo... & myself Started about one Hour by son for wilmington having Nither a pilate

[12]

nor any good Experianced Boteman we put to the water Drove on with Tolerable Speede untill Dark. having no place to Tarry only Recommend ourselves in an old Leaky Boate we all Hands Laid to the oares So Vigerous that we made the most Speedy Sail any Persons had been Known. about midnight we came to a House 4 miles from the town Lay untill Day then pushed to town Refreshed ourselves on almost Evrything good the Remaining part of the Day and Night when about 2 oclock Rcd. the Certain account that the british was yet in the Harber and was burning some of there Vesselsthen on the on the 20th we Lay in Town packing of salt and Drinking then on the 21st Captain Humphries and myself started for HeadQuarters while Lt Peeples & Lt...

[13]

[The top half of this page has been cut off.]

Humphries Boated up the Boat of Salt, then on the 22nd we went to the River and the Boate Landed with the Number of 400 bushels of Salt Loaded in the Night of the same Then on the 23d Rcd, acts, that Genl Green in full possession of Charlestown, we started on the same day after long Debate about the salt marched to Clatons Branch and there Loged in some Confusion then on the 24th Started. . . Early marched

[14]

[Reverse of the out page.]

To our old Incampment at Jones Captain Humphries waggons being some what out of Repare we Drove about 2 miles in front of the Brigade to fix at one Hamiltons while the Troops posted in an old house to shelter them from the Clemmency of the Weather it being raining and also to Cook. Captain Humphries Lieut Peeples & myself went to the House to a muse our selves with the Conversation & songs of a Couple of young

[15]

Ladys. after Rehearsing many agreeable passages and Deliverating Verry merrily on them we thought proper then to pass some few Hours in Diverting our Selves on Pleasant songs &c. However the Latter not proving so agreeable as we Expected Occaisioned us to Repare to our Lodgings

Then on the 25th Decamped marched but a small spase when we overset our waggon to it proved nothing to our Disadvantage only the Loss of time. marched then Verry well and without anything Remarkable only Several waggons oversetting & the day being exceding with occaisioned the waggons & Troops to Camp Verry Disorderly---26th the weather being clear and good marched Verry well passed Duplin Court one mile Camped when the Genl gave orders to Distribute one Hogshead of Rum

[16]

October 13th day of 1781------A Philips & C. April 19th 1783 Liut John O Daniel 9s Liut Charles Gilley 5 State of North Carolina L14.10 No. 54 Salisbury District

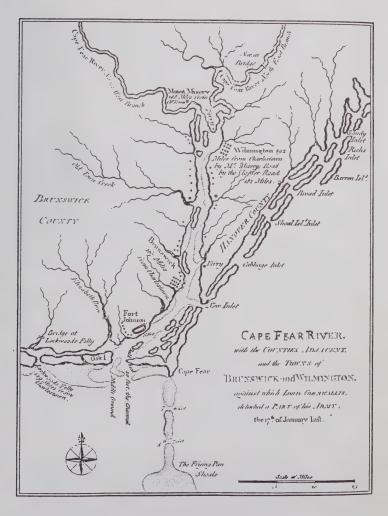
This may certify that Abraham Philips was allowed fourteen pounds Ten Shillings Specie for public claims by the upper Board of auditors 4th day August 1783 James Harrles Saml Henderson Charles Bruce³³

[17]

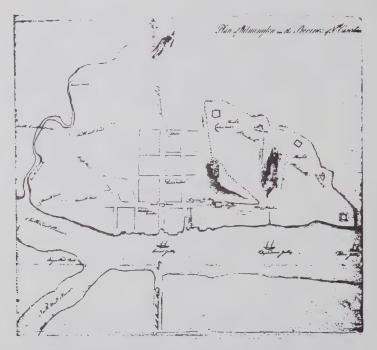
only to the officers Divided it as followeth Colo 6 gallions Lt & Major 5 Do Captains 3 Do Luts 2 Do with a proportion of Sugar & Coffee that being Done marched about Eight oclock tho we being some what Discommoded by having a . . . stole from the waggon march. 9 miles above a mill whare we Expected some Supply of meal and the like however to our loss we got but little a Constant Debate Still Subsisting among the Brigade about the Division of the Salt 27th & 28th proposals ware made by Col. Martin & Major Gillaspie to Equally Distribute it among all the troops however Not agreeing we thought as we had marched hitherto in front we would take the Rare accordingly Did after Driving about 1 mile Swamped one of our waggons and Disabled one which in such a manner halted our march on 29th marched about four miles Mett Captain Cathy with about 15 men from the Brigade in order to forward our march

[18]

with the unreasonable Orders from Genl Rutherford to persue the Troops which by the best Information was



Cape Fear River Inscription reads: "London. Published as the Act directed March 21st 1781 by J. Bew Pater Noster Row".



Plan of Wilmington in the Providence of North Carolina

This 1781 map was drawn for the British army of occupation. British galleys COMET, DEPENDENCE, AND ADDER appear on the map as do the British redoubts, headquarters, and hospital. Map courtesy North Carolina State Archives, Raleigh, North Carolina.

Twenty miles on there march for Sproles ferry our waggons and Troops Came to Captain Williams about 2 oclock by this time Debates arose between Captain Cathey and us Concerning 15 bushels of Salt of an overpluss that Still Remained in our waggons. The Troops and Waggons being the Day before Discharged However after Some Debate we Disloaded the Salt Cathey urging the Genls orders to waggon it to Camp be they whare they would, the Troops and waggons amediately started for Hillsborough after

Travilling about one mile our troops being Considerable Scattered tho fortunately for us Colo Martin & Major Gillaspie were in rare. Captain Cathey with men attacked the Rare. Determined to Take our waggon by force of arms our men being in good spirits and shewed an undaunted Countenance

[19]

We urged Every Reasonable Circumstance to aQuite us Tho all in Vain finding nothing but the forse of men to Deliver us which Debates warmly arose. Major Gillaspie told him that Justice shined nobly in our favour and that if Nothing could pervale but to Repeal force by force we would Risk Evrything sured on the Occaision Before one man or waggon Should turn to incumber themselves under such an unjust Command. Cathy finding Evry attempt frusterated and that it was more than probable he should meete with little Success, he Retreated back from us we then marched without any Difficulty only hindered some small time at a bridge, after all Crossed safe Col Martin Major Gillaspie Lt Peeples Rode Seprately on to Col Bryans on Nuse Tarryed untill 30th then started Verry Early in Travilled about 35 miles to Crabtree Tignal Jones then on 1st Deer Started about 2 Hours Before day travilled through Hillsborough

[20]

about 15 miles to James Murrays on Jourdin's Creek about 40 miles---Then started at Brake of Day on 2 Decr Came Home. Rode about 35 miles Horse that Day -- after the spase of Three months in Service

A Philips

Notes

The Introduction

¹Irene Webster and Linda Vernon (eds.), Early Families of the North Carolina Counties of Rockingham and Stokes with Revolutionary Service (Madison: James Hunter Chapter, DAR, 1977), 93-94. Rockingham County Wills, Book B, 150, Wentworth. U.S. Census, 1830. Robert W. Carter, Jr., "Old Sandy Cross Homes and Families," The Journal of Rockingham County History and Genealogy, 1: 79-80.

²Rockingham County Court Minutes, November, 1810: November, 1811. Joseph G. deR. Hamilton (ed.), *The Papers of Thomas Ruffin.* 4 vols. (Raleigh: North Carolina Historical Commission, 1918-1920), 1: 199.

³Rockingham County Court Minutes, February, 1786; May, 1796; November, 1796; February, 1799; May, 1804; May, 1807; February, 1827.

⁴John L. Cheney, Jr. (ed.), North Carolina Government, 1585-1979: A Narrative and Statistical History (Raleigh: Department of the Secretary of State, 1981), 221, 223, 225, 236, 237, 239, 242, 244, 246, 262, 263, 265, 767, 769.

⁵John R. Sellers, et al (comps.), Manuscript Sources in the Library of Congress for Research on the American Revolution (Washington: Library of Congress, 1975), 93.

⁶William H. Hoyt (ed.), The Papers of Archibald D. Murphey. 2 vols. (Raleigh: North Carolina Historical Commission, 1917), 2: 212-311.

The Summary Narrative and the Journal

¹William Washington of Virginia, a distant cousin of George Washington, was a lieutenant colonel of Continental dragoons under General Greene in the Southern campaign. John S. Pancake, This Destructive War. The British Campaign in the Carolinas. 1780-1782 (University, ALA: University of Alabama Press, 1985), passim.

²John Paisley was appointed lieutenant colonel of the Guilford County militia in 1776 and served throughout the war. Lindley S. Butler (ed.), *The Narrative of Col Dayid Fanning* (Davidson: Briarpatch Press, 1981), 49n.

³ James Martin, brother of Alexander Martin, was colonel of the Guilford County militia from 1776. He had moved from northern Guilford County to Stokes County by the end of the war. Lindley S. Butler, Rockingham County A Brief History (Raleigh: Department of Cultural Resources, 1982), 14.

⁴Griffith Rutherford of Rowan County was a captain of the county militia before the war. Appointed colonel of the militia in 1775, he was elected brigadier general of the western district the following year. He commanded the successful campaign against the Cherokees in 1776. He was wounded and captured at Camden, S.C. and imprisoned at St. Augustine, Fla. After his exchange in 1781 he was given command of the operations against Wilmington. Samuel A. Ashe (ed.), Biographical History of North Carolina from Colonial Times to the Present, 8 vols. (Greensboro; Charles L Van Noppen, 1905-1917), 2: 381-385.

^bLittle River, one of several rivers of this name in North Carolina, flows through Hoke, Moore, and Cumberland counties. William S. Powell, The North Carolina Gazetteer (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1988), 291.

⁶Thomas Wade, a planter of Anson County, was appointed colonel of the county militia in 1776. He also served as a state Senator 1780-1783. He suffered a severe defeat on Downing Creek on 1 September 1781 by David Fanning. Butler, Fanning's Narrative, 52n., 53n.

⁷John Butler of the Hawfields in Orange County was appointed colonel of the County militia in 1776. During the was he served in the House of Commons, the state Senate, and was a member of the Council of State. He was elected brigadier general of the Hillsborough District in 1777 and was in a number of actions in the war. William S. Powell (ed.), Dictionary of North Carolina Biography, 2 vols. (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1979-), 1:290-291.

⁸Rockfish Creek, is located in Hoke and Cumberland Counties and flows east into the Cape Fear River. Powell, Gazetteer, 420.

⁹McFalls Mill was located on a branch of Downing Creek in the Raft Swamp in present Hoke County. It was a major Tory rendezvour point in 1781. Butler, Fanning's Narrative, 52n. McFalls is sometimes spelled McPhaul's. The mill was about five miles south of Raeford, N.C.

¹⁰Hector McNeil was the nephew of Colonel Hector McNeil of Bladen County, who was killed at Lindley's Mill in September. The younger Hector succeeded his uncle as colonel of the county militia. He evacuated the state with the British and was in Charleston in 1782. Butler, Fanning's Narrative, 52n.

¹¹The action described here is dated on 15 October by Major Joseph Graham. Graham's narrative furnished more detail. Hoyt, Murphey Papers, 2: 300-302.

¹²Black Swamp is primarily found in western Bladen County. Powell, Gazetteer, 52.

¹³Graham identifies the sergeant as McAdoo. Hoyt, Murphey Papers, 2: 302-303.

¹⁴Graham states the swamp drive began on 17 October. Hoyt, Murphey Papers, 2: 303.

¹⁵Probably Alexander Erwin of Burke County who fought at King's Mountain and became colonel of the Burke County militia. Powell, Dictionary, 2: 163-164.

¹⁶Charles McDowell was lieutenant colonel of the Rowan County militia. After the formation of Burke County from Rowan he was colonel of the Burke militia. In 1782 he was elected brigadier general of the western district. Lyman C. Draper King's Mountain and Its Heroes (Spartenburg: Reprint Company, 1967), 471-473, passim.

¹⁷Saddletree Creek is in northern Robeson County and flows into the Lumber River. Powell. Gazetteer, 431.

¹⁸Elizabeth Town, the county seat of Bladen County, was established in 1773. Powell. Gazetteer. 160.

¹⁹ Hugh Waddell was North Carolina's leading frontie: Indian fighter and ranking militia officer in the French and Indian War and the War of the Regulation. He died in 1773 at his home on the Cape Fear River. Alfred M. Waddell, A Colonial Officer and His Times, 1754-1773 (Raleigh: Edwards and Broughton, 1890), passim.

²⁰ Alexander Martin, Guilford County's most important Revolutionary leader, served as a lieutenant colonel and colonel of Continental troops, a state Senator, Speaker of the Senate, acting governor and governor. He had a plantation on the Dan River in present Rockingham County and a home at Guilford Courthouse. Butler, Rockingham County 13

²¹Robert Mebane of Orange County was commissioned a lieutenant colonel in the Continental line in 1776. He had been captured in Charleston in 1780 and exchanged. At the time of his death he was a colonel of militia. According to Caruthers he was

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assassinated by a loyalist. Butler, Fanning's Narrative, 54n.

²²William ONeal of Orange County was a major and later colonel of the county mili-

tia. Butler, Fanning's Narrative, 50n.

²³David Fanning, the most famous Tory commander of the Carolinas, was colonel of the Randolph and Chatham counties loyalist militia. He led raids on Pittsboro and Hillsborough where he captured the governor. Butler, Fanning's Narrative, 1-17. Powell, Dictionary, 2: 179-181.

²⁴Brown Swamp is in eastern Cumberland County. Powell, Gazetteer, 66.

²⁵Robert Smith of Mecklenburg County had served in the Continental line as a captain and was appointed colonel in command of the cavalary in the Wilmington campaign. He later was a general in the militia. Hoyt, Murphey Papers, 2: 299.

²⁶The brick house was opposite Wilmington across the Cape Fear River. The British fortified it and used it to protect the ferry landing. Graham describes the action at the brick house in considerable detail. Hoyt, *Murphey Papers*, 2: 297, 305-308.

²⁷Richard Simmons was a militia captain from Rowan County and commanded a troop of dragoons in the Wilmington campaign. Hoty, Murphey Papers, 2: 299.

²⁸Sir James Henry Craig commanded the British Occupation of Wilmington as a major in the 82nd Regiment. He was very effective in supporting loyalist raiders in the interior of the state. Wilmington was occupied by the British from January to November 1781. Craig's able service in the Revolution and the Napoleonic wars led to his promotion to lieutenant general and governor of Upper Canada. He was eventually knighted. Butler, Fanning's narrative, 38n.

²⁹As part of the defense of Wilmington the British had at least three row galleys. ³⁰Daniel Gillespie was a captain in the Guilford County militia and a member of the

General Assembly. Webster and Vernon, Early Families, 37. Cheney, North Carolina Government, 203, 223, 224, 225, 227, 229, 230, 766, 769.

³¹David Humphries was a captain in the Guilford County militia. Webster and Vernon. Early Families. 72.

³²Nathan Peeples was a lieutenant in the Guilford County militia. Revolutionary Army Account Book A: 264. North Carolina Archives, Raleigh.

³³This document appears to be a pay voucher or military claim that does not relate to the narrative.

³⁴Tignal Jones of Crabtree Creek in Wake County was a member of the General Assembly and lieutenant colonel of the county militia. Cheney, North Carolina Government, 202, 215, 236. Walter M. Clark (ed.), The State Records of North Carolina, 16 vols. (Winston and Goldsboro: State of North Carolina, 1898-1906), 12: 600, 619, 714.

THE PHILIPS LETTERS

transcribed by

Ingram Philips and Bob Carter

notes by Bob Carter

Five letters written by Abraham Philips have been located and reprinted in this article. Three of the letters (dated 1828, 1831 and 1831) are located in the Manuscript Division of the Library of Congress in Washington. These letters were sent to Washington in 1853 when Philips' heirs were trying to secure pension funds for his services during the Revolutionary War. The letters became part of the pension records and were later placed in the Library of Congress.

Ingram Philips, a descendant of Abraham, secured copies of two additional letters (dated 1831 and 1833) from Mary R. Philips of Alexander City, Alabama. Mrs. Philips also furnished a copy of an 1836 letter written by Charles Philips to his brothers, Pleasant and James, a few weeks after the death of their father.

The last Philips letter was written in 1860 by Pleasant Philips of Lamington, Alabama to Charlotte Linder Orran of Woodbury, Tennessee. A copy of this letter was sent to Bob Carter in the early 1980s by Clara Mae Leutuyler of Austin, Texas) deceased 1984), who was a descendant of the Orrans and Linders of Rockingham County. The original grammar and spelling of the letters have been retained.

The editor wishes to thank Ingram Philips, Linda Vernon and Betty J. Baker for much of the informantion used in the notes.

ABRAHAM PHILIPS TO PLEASANT AND ISAAC PHILIPS

Rockingham County 16th June 1828

Dear Sons Pleasant1 and Isaac2,

As from the Information of your letter of the 28th April he was at your house and likely to Remain there a while - on account of his Ill Disposition of health (poor fellow I pity his case) But he is in the hands

of the Almighty Disposer of Events- and must Rest on his mercies for preservation as we all have to depend. My family as well as many of the Neighbors have been Considerable attacked with a Complaint of disintary nearly like the flux - it has nearly gone through my family, myself not excepted - I lost one young negro child with it - and many of the others sick a week or 10 days - But are nearly all well at present-Report has its killing considerable of persons in Henry County in Virginia - as the longer any disease Rages - the more mortals it terminates -- I discover from your letter the frosts were very severe in your section of the Country so much so as to have done much injury to your crops particularly to your small grain - it was severe with us But the season being not so forward vegetation excaped the Bitter-I have the greatest prospect of a Harest I have ever had- and am about to commence cutting rye this day which is excellent- my corn, cotton and tobacco looks well- the season has been very good so far- and should it only continue great crops will be made with us this season - I have upwards of 30 acres in Rye, 15 Wheat - between 30 and 40 in Oats - Cotton³ about 20 acres - Tobacco 30,000⁴. The prices of all those articles continue very low-Corn selling now from \$1.50 to \$2 - Bacon 10 cents. I have on hand 1500 or 1600 Cotton and about 3000 of Tobacco and only offered for Cotton \$8.5, \$3.25 for Tobacco⁶. Of course the circulation of money scarce. Very little Tobacco planted in this neighborhood as such it will rise in price -Robert Martin⁷ set out the last of May on a purchasing trip⁸. George Lowe and Simpson went on from our Court-Martin a five days after-No return from any of them as yet-that I know of. I have not received as yet an answer from Col Henderson my agent in Tennessee-Respecting my business there.10 Maj Sharp11 gone to the lower parts of South Carolina trading tobacco, leather and oyl (?) - his family all well a few days ago. Jefferson Pursell12 continues low and dibilitated his Complaint not known - he is principally confined to his bed. I discover from your letter that you and Charles has become Candidates to represent in the Ensuing Legislature in Georgia your respective Countys- and from the Ruling political sentiments as appears to prevail in Georgia at this time - I think your tender is at an unfavorable crisis to meet sucess however so it must Rest until the suffridges of the people are known-Should you meet a disappointment-my counsel is bear it with fortitude as those events always happen - to some who make tender to serve the public in any station whatever. I have been strongly solicited that I have consented to suffer my name held out as a candidate for an Elector to support the Jackson Ticket for this district. Doc. Boman¹³ of Stokes

The Philips Letters

comprates me on the Administration Ticket - All I can further observe that I wish you well - Isaac and Sarah¹⁴ - Betsey and the Children¹⁵ - Let me hear often from Isaac's situation as well as all the Rest - Your mother joins me in our Best wishes to your two families - Watts, ¹⁶ James, ¹⁷ Charles, ¹⁸ I am at Patricks¹⁹ - I will write to you all before long when I have more in possision then at present - in hast I

Remain yours -A. Philips

Addressed: Dr. Pleasant Philips, Jones County Georgia — This came to hand the 1st July 1828.

ABRAHAM PHILIPS TO PLEASANT PHILIPS

24th March 1831

Dear Son

Pleasant - as Mr. Roach²⁰, passes my house at about 2 o'clock just giving me time to say that your mother is in health together with the rest of my family. I feel that I stuty mend from my misfortune But it continues so long however- I keep my health nor have I been sick-but very little since my hurt -- Baker²¹ and family is well - and so is the neighbors around me-Major Sharps family also well-He is waiting the return of John Patrick²² Esquire and his brother Samuel Sharp²³ who went on the purchase of Negroes and have been gone a long time-when they do come will set out immediately for Georgia- his stay is only waiting their return. He has paid out considerable of money in this and the adjoining counties- and no escapes from him that I have heard of- at Court last I saw the 2 Barnetts²⁴, Jas. and William Esquire. They informed me all was well with them then - I hope the winter is broke - my plows are running. Done sowing oates - and now setting for corn and should the weather continue shall commence planting corn next week if not this week-In great hast and I must close this short information-with adding our best wishes to you Betsey and the children - Should you see your Brother James tell him that I shall write him shortly and his family as I have not time at this time-But wish them well-In hast I conclude vours.

A. Philips

Addressed: Dr Pleasant Philips, Jones County Georgia - This came to hand the 22d April 1831 - Answered the 29th April 1831.

ABRAHAM PHILIPS TO JAMES PHILIPS

16th April, 1831

Dear Son.

James your letter of the 30th November last came to hand and I am pleased to be informed that your family was all well when your last came to hand and in answer I now say your mother enjoys good state of health with the rest of our family. For my self I can not answer from that fall I got so long ago- my head constantly swimming and a dibility in my lims- not sick otherwaise and whether those feelings will cease I cannot say how or when. My walk is slow and especially on rising ground and in wet weather my feelings are worse then dry whether tho.

The neighborhood is in tolarble health tho some losses - Robert Sanders²⁵ Robert Lynch²⁶ and Delancy²⁷ is dead lately. It is said that Delancys home caught on fire and burnt while he was a dying with the whole of their property (he was a very poor man) it is said.

We are more then half done planting corn and have fell on a plan as soon as a field is planted broke the middles before we leave the field then washing rains cannot destroy the corn planted; have planted some cotton and hope to finish except new ground corn which is best planted in May.

Pleasant said that you all wished to know if [I] could not visit you in Georgia this Spring from my feelings, at present, I cannot under take the journey of so great a distance tho it wood be gratifying to my feeling to come and spend sometime with you all in that country. But its uncertain when that may be but I wish to keep up our corrispondence by letters.

Your Mother revives your presents with thankfull remembrance and means to ______ them as a token from whence they come.

I suppose Maj. Sharp will be off in a few days for Georgia and will have it in his power to hand these few lines to you and bring your answer for the receipt of them. She joins in our best wishes to you Margrate and the children - in hast I remain most Respectifully yours & c.

A. Philips

Addressed: James and Margrate Philips

Macon Ga., Jan. 2, 1834

Dear Uncle,

The Philips Letters

Knowing the handwright I have taken the liberty of opening the letter which I hope will be no offence. I heard this morning that Uncle Doctor²⁸ had lost another little negro with scarlet fever. We have no news in Macon______ a farther declim in prices of cotton, premin will not command more than 9/2.

yours very repectfully, A. P. Patrick²⁹

Addressed: Mr. James Philips Monro County, Ga. Macon Post Office

ABRAHAM PHILIPS TO PLEASANT PHILIPS

5th November 1831

Dear Son Pleasant - your letter by Mr. & Mrs. Broach and came to hand the 28th October last bearing the agreeable information that your family with James and Charles when you had heard from him was in good health which is gratifying to us - to hear our family tho at a distance possess health - which is the greatest blessing this life is able to afford or receive. In answer I tell you that your Mother myself Major Sharp, Bakers and the heighborhood enjoys tolarable health-But I must tell you I have been informed this week at Court that Zachariah Strong³¹ died perhaps last Sunday. Old Mr. Charles Bruce³² is dead. Mrs. Sharp, wife of Adam Sharp Esq. 33 died also. I have been at Court from Monday until last evening - Nothing worth your attention was decided on then. Your further inform me that you succeeded in your Election which news is agreeable to us. I am now gathering my corn and our crop will be tolerable good-Tobacco very good - I have engaged another overseer for next year - a Virginian - by the name of Sidliff⁸⁴, John Miller³⁵ has brought part of Smalls³⁶ old place. My present overseer - and so soon as he can get away the other comes. You named to me that you wanted an overseerand thought Wm. Lynch³⁷ would suit you on reasonable terms - him I have not seen - whether Thomas Lowe³⁸ will go to Georgia shortly I am not able to say but as the season is approaching to have hands engaged to business perhaps you had better get one about you who will take notice of your hands in your absence while at the Assembly-You further observe that your section of the country has been under an alarm supposing the Negroes was about to rise³⁹ - it appears that we were under apprehension about the same time - it went so far that our Col. issued orders to the Captains to raise the militia - I was sent for to the Court House-Being from home-I went the next morning-when all the reports appeared groundless - Col. Wright⁴⁰ told me that they had sent for me to get counsel knowing my experience in former Wars was more than they possess - the whole alarm has Risen from the Insurrection in Virginia - that appears to be True - which your papers will tell you. All my negroes appeared surprised and scared at the Information. Son answering your observation about your Gov. you know I know not either of them - that I have nothing to say on the subject nor have I expresed my opinion to any person on the subject of the Governors Election in the State of Georgia. Was it in North Carolina -- then I should have a vote or give my opinion to those who represent us to make a good governor. When I begun this letter, I expected to have sent it by Broach and his wife But now shall send it by Major Sharp. Broach will not start so soon as Sharp as I understand. I vet complain of my feelings with a lightness in my head and dibility over my whole system - the 6th Nov 1831 your Mother joins in our Best wishes to you and your family - James family You excuse this hasty scrall which concludes me.

A. Philips NB - After you get to the Assembly let me hear from you.

Addressed: Dr. Pleasant Philips, Jones County Georgia, P Maj James Sharp.

This came to hand the 20th Nov 1831.

ABRAHAM PHILIPS TO JAMES PHILIPS

24 Nov.th, 1833

Dear Son James,

I received a letter from Pleasant yesterday dated 7th instant stating that his family with yourn and the neighbors were in health and that there House had commenced on the business of Legistation. He states that some confusion took place between the Union partie and the Nullifers⁴¹ tho was settle. I can do______ that differences is not at its end in the Southern States.

The Philips Letters

Your mother with the rest of my family is in tolaberly health - but my feelings am different - no better then when you was at my house.

Polly Sharp⁴² and her family is well, Bakers also.

The Town⁴³ at our Court House have made a great change since you was there. A man of the name of Holerby⁴⁴ now Clerk of the Court. John Reed,⁴⁵ Esq. [is] Register. Col. John J. Wright⁴⁶ has resigned as Justice of the Peace and moved to the house that McClary⁴⁷ built at the Court House. Gallaways old Tavern⁴⁸ now owned by Josiah Roberts,⁴⁹ brother of the Sheriff.⁵⁰ I believe the Gallaways have sold all there posessions at the Court House. Two very good stores⁵¹ now there, all strangers to us and they fixing in some better styles at that place then heretofore.

James you may remember some time back that I wrote to all my sons that it would be out my power to attend to the business of my land in the West. 52 Since which time my agent Maj. William H. Loving who is a Lawyer, has sent on to me \$400., three for Mann and \$100. for himself, the money sent to me had started before the letter had reached him. And my instruction to him if he did not get the money soon to commence a suit against him. I am waiting daily for his answer nor have I sent him the notes to commence suit on. I must wait a short time for his answer on the business and should it suit you to go and see about the business it will please me. When you go you must take the notes with you, either to settle with Mann or my agent William H. Loving. I hold his note \$437.50 on which he has sent me \$100 and for William A.W. Mann \$300. But Mann two notes in my hands calls for \$500 each note the last payment was due the first day of January, 1833. However if you go you must take the notes with you as the credits is entered on the back of the notes. No more.

I remain your Loving father,
A. Philips
Addressed: James and Margrate Philips

CHARLES PHILIPS TO PLEASANT AND JAMES PHILIPS

Dear Brothers,

I got home late last night and received your several letters with their inclosures of check and notes and also the unpleasant news of the death of our lamented and beloved father. Abraham Baker⁵³ had wrote me whilst the corpse was in the house. I this morning sent for Esquire Watt⁵⁴ who now sits by my side and we had determined on my taking the stage tonight and seeing you as early as possible and make decisive arrangements and for us to start on as soon as possible. You state your views so forcibly that we deem my unpleasant trip on the stage unnecessary.

We agree with you both in going on and tell you we will start as soon as you say we must, say in a week or more. Anna⁵⁵ desires to go on and justice as well as my own desire is that she should. My horses is so poor and out of order I am afraid to start them until a little recruted.

We think the will must be proved. Pierce⁵⁶ is under age and I am not guardian and for fear of the wont let it be done according to law. Go on buy a waggon, a good one and gear and what horses may be wanted. Prepare and hare the negros off as soon as possible. I bring my carriage to bring out mother. Esquire Watt will be on horseback. Provisions must be made to bring sister Sharp⁵⁷ and her property also is our desires. We will bring as much as \$700. So if you think that is not enough say so and we will have more tho Father had money. We think this law must be complied with about the will not with standing most of us of age - counsel some able hand on the law and commerce, likewise I think a sale can be advertised to take place so long as the will is approved and an executor appointed. You two can act according to your best judgements which will give us satisfaction and be assured we will be on as soon as necessary. Say, if it will not answer for us to start in two weeks - tho at any time after one if you deside so. If we are compeld to stay until the 4th Monday in May⁵⁸ it will be a long time for all hands to lie there. I think the negros kned not wait for the sale one or two would be sufficient to keep and lets have all the ballance started as soon as possible. You two can adver-to your selves the day of start and we will be there before that time. Give us your views fully if you have the chance.

I turned over to Mr Moffatt⁵⁹ this morning all your letters and moneys to attend your requests as I expected to be off and could not. If the governor (?)⁶⁰ and Brother Sharp⁶¹ comes on soon I will spend two days with them in Alabama before I start. This Esquire ______ to you both and all relations.

Truly yours, Chas. Philips

PLEASANT PHILIPS TO CHARLOTTE ORRAND

Lamington, Ala. 18th Jany., 1860

Mrs. Charlotte Orrand,62

Your very kind favor to me of the 1st inst. was recd yesterday from your son. I think that he told me that his name was John Westley Orrand. Yes Lottey Linder you can have no idea of my feelings when I recd a letter from one of my old pupils or scholars. ⁶³ You flatter us much. Many years since I have recd such a treat. My family now all up. I married on Thursday the 6th, May 1819 to Betsey Barnett near to Leaksville in Rockingham County, No C. when she was born the 23rd Jany, 1792. Consequently I was going on 31 years old and my wife 27 years old when we married yet we had six children, 4 girls and two sons; two of our girls are dead, our oldest dead from Scarlett Fever. Our youngest daughter, Mary, died at our house and she left two children, a girl about 4 years old and an infant son that she never give any suck to. We have raised the last child a fine boy by hand, he is a perfect pet in our family. He will be five years old the 25th next April.

You were then in error. I was then studying medicine perhaps James Philips and Sterling Lanier⁶⁴ was then studying surveying. I do not remember. You ask about poor Betsey Philips, she married Hugh Watt of Rockingham County and I think that they moved to Jones County in Georgia in the fall of 1819 and I think the next spring she died in Jones County leaving 5 children, three daughters and two sons - after which Hugh Watt Esq. married again and had 4 children. Hugh Watt has been dead some years. Sister Polley you know married Maj. James Sharp, both him and sister Polley died at their place in Rockingham County, No. C. Brother Charles died in Harris County, Ga. the 27th Nov. 1836. Brother Isaac died in Harris County the 25th Oct., 1828. Our father died in Rockingham County the 23rd March 1836. Our mother died at my house in Alabama the 3rd Febry. 1837, her remains is now taking her everlasting sleep on my land. She is quite decently buryed. David Lanier⁶⁵ took to drinking in his old age and left his family poor, he died here in Alabama. Doctor Buckner Lanier⁶⁶ died in South Carolina, he left considerably of property.

I did not know that my father administered upon your fathers estate. No, my father left my mother his executrix of his estate as we



Home of Capt. Abraham Philips built circa 1800 on Rock House Creek, Rockingham County, North Carolina. The house was remodeled to its present form in 1872 by David Purcell, son of George Purcell who purchased the Philips' property in 1836. The house is still occupied by Purcell descendants. Photograph courtesy Robert W. Carter, Jr.

his children were then all of age when he had his will wrote. My brother James (now in life)⁶⁷ and myself examined a great many of our fathers old papers after his death. We did not find among our fathers old papers your fathers discharge as a Revolutionary War. We think if your father was a soldier in the Revolutionary War, the proper place to apply is to the Comptrollers Office in Raleigh, North Carolina where the old Muster Roll and the pay roll can be found. I do not now remember ever to have seen your father but once and he died shortly after I did see him. I have told your son to write to old Mr. George Pursell⁶⁸ (you know him) about your father having been a Revolutionary Soldier. I was then too young to know anything about his services in that War. I have refered your son to Abraham Baker to identify you as a daughter of Nathaniel Linder with me and



The Philips-Purcell home on Rock House Creek where Abraham Philips died in 1836. Tradition says the large oak tree on the east side of the house was planted by Abraham Philips. Photograph courtesy Robert W. Carter, Jr.

brother James, all can be done by writing to those men.

Yes, we once knowed William Sanders, ⁶⁹ he is now an old man and we knowed Jinney Sanders, ⁷⁰ both of them was raised about one mile from us. We do truly regret to hear that Mrs. Joseph Orran is almost blind. Lottey, we did not think that you had lived 40 years with John Orran, yet times slips away very fast. You ask me about Capt. William Orrans⁷¹ family. Your son has heard from them since we have. They did live we think about 3 miles from Monticello in Laurence County, Missippi near to Pearl River. I do not know their situation.

Isaac Philips was born 12th June 1794. My brother James thinks that you and our brother Isaac was near the same age. James Philips was born the 10th April 1796, your son thinks that you say that you was born in the year of 1796. My brother James now has the 2nd wife. He and brother thinks that you and brother Isaac was near the same

age and that him and your sister Salley was near the same age - it makes no differance we both believe that you was the daughter of Nathaniel Linder of Rockingham County, No. C.

Now for the Rockingham acquaintances; old Mr. Reubin Johnson⁷² and his wife are both dead; Old Mr. Thomas Lytle, ⁷³ his wife and his two sons that could not talk are all dead; Moses Napier⁷⁴ and his wife who purchased McClarans Mills⁷⁵ are both dead; Ellerson Young⁷⁶ was in the Poor House and has married the 2nd wife in the Poor House; Abram Baker and his two sisters Salley⁷⁷ and Cynthia⁷⁸ lives at his fathers old place. We do not know where Charles Baker is living. John Martin⁷⁹ and his wife both died in Macon, Ga. Old Mr. George Pursell purchased our fathers land. He now lives at that place, his wife has been dead some years, he has a son Quinton Purcell⁸⁰ who stays the most of his time in Columbus, Georgia, he has the appearance of being comumptive. Long since we have heard of old Jacob Whitworth⁸¹ and old Mr. Fowler.⁸² I presum that you would know very few people indeed in Rockingham County as far as we hear all of the old people are dead.

We have had the pleasure of your son and Mr. Dillon with us one night. I have made a mule swap with them. They are now gone to Columbus with their stock-it would be a great pleasure to us to have a visit from Mrs. Lottey Orran at anytime. Our best respects to you and your children and to Mrs. Rachel Orran.

I am most respectfully yours, P. Philips

P.S.

We had forgot to say to you that Isaac Baker⁸³ lives in Alabama near to the line of Randolph and Chambers Counties. He married a widow and they have one daughter. He is worth as much_____ of the Bakers. We have heard that_____ man.

Addressed: Mrs. Charlotte Orran Woodbury Court House Cannon County, Tennessee

NOTES

¹Pleasant Philips was born November 20, 1787 in Rockingham County, the son of Abraham and Cynthia Lanier Philips. He married Elizabeth Barnett May, 1819 in Rockingham County. (Marriage Bonds). Philips died December 6, 1860 in Lamington, Alabama. All Philips information furnished by Ingram Philips who is now living in Europe.

²Isaac Philips, son of Abraham and Cynthia, was born in 1794 and died in Harris County, Georgia October 25, 1828. He married Sarah Lewis in 1823 and had three children.

³Cotton was never a major money crop in Rockingham County. In 1825 Abraham Philips was one of the leaders in a movement to form an Agricultural Society in the county and perhaps the 20 acres of cotton planted in 1828 was an attempt to prove the crop could be successfully grown here. Neither the society or cotton succeeded in the county.

⁴Tobacco, as it has been since Colonial days, remained the largest money crop of Rockingham County farmers. During the ante-bellum period county planters developed a large "down South tobacco trade" by peddling their manufactured plug tobacco from covered wagons over a wide area. During the 19th and early 20th century tobacco crops were measured by number of plants. By counting about 5,000 plants per acre, 30,000 hills would amount to 6 or 7 acres of tobacco.

⁵The price of cotton was likely \$8 per bale. Rockingham County land probably produced less than one bale per acre.

⁶The price of tobacco was \$3.25 for 100 pounds of cured leaf.

⁷Robert Martin, Jr. was born April 12, 1784, the son of Robert Martin, Sr. and a nephew of Gov. Alexander Martin. He was a merchant and planter in Rockingham County and also the owner of large tracts of land in Mississippi. This is the first known reference to Martin as a slave trader. Martin married Mary Settle of Rockingham County. He died May 25, 1848 and was buried in the Settle Family Cemetery.

⁸A purchasing trip means the men had gone to Virginia or Maryland to buy negroes for resale in the lower south.

⁹George Yancey Lowe was born February 2, 1802, the son of Thomas Lowe, Sr. and wife Mary Holman of Rockingham County. George married Lucinda A. Tharp April 11, 1838 in Twiggs County, Georgia and died February 27, 1841 in Macon County, Georgia. Information from Linda C. Vernon, Stoneville, North Carolina.

¹⁰See Abraham Philips' will for mention of land he owned in Haywood County,

Tennessee. Rockingham Will Book B, p. 150.

¹¹Major James Sharp was the son of Adam and Mary Whitesides Sharp who were married in Orange County, North Carolina in 1789. Marriage Bond information from Linda Vernon. Adam Sharp and family moved to the Jacobs Creek area of Rockingham County soon after 1800. His son James was the second husband of Abraham Philips' daughter, Mary. James who was a planter and tanyard owner, was also involved in the slave trade business. See *The Greensboro Patriot*, March 9, 1831.

12 Jefferson Purcell was a son of George Purcell (c. 1767 - c. 1860) who purchased the Abraham Philips Plantation in 1836. Jefferson was never married and died before his father's death. See Rockinghalm Will Book C, p. 349 and "The Purcell Family History", written in 1939 by Eugene P. Purcell of Salisbury, North Carolina.

¹³Dr. Andrew Bowman (August 12, 1772 - January 2, 1845), an early doctor in

Stokes County, was a resident of Germanton. In 1799 he married Nancy Bynum, the daughter of Gray Bynum. Dr. Bowman and his wife are buried in the Germanton Methodist Church Cemetery. Information from Linda Vernon.

¹⁴Here Abraham refers to his son Isaac and wife Sarah Lewis Philips.

¹⁵The Betsy mentioned here is Pleasant's wife Elizabeth Barnett.

¹⁶ Hugh Watt was the son of Samuel and Jean Nickels Watt. See Rockingham Will Book B, p. 301. Watt married Abraham's daughter, Elizabeth, in December, 1810. They moved to Jones County, Georgia in the fall of 1819. She died there on

September 17, 1822. Information from Ingram Philips.

¹⁷Abraham's youngest son, James, was born April 16, 1797. He was married twice; first to Margaret Lewis and second to Mrs. Sherwood. As early as 1821 James was a slave trader and was buying negroes in Dorchester County, Maryland. See McAlister's Dorchester County, Maryland Deed Abstracts, hereinafter cited as Dorchester Abstracts, James died September 13, 1863 and was buried in the Philips - Barnett Cemetery, Russell County, Alabama. Information from a letter dated December 25, 1984 from Mariam K. Morgan of Minden, Louisiana to Peggy E. Osborne, Eden, North Carolina.

¹⁸Charles Philips, son of Abraham, was born April 6, 1790 in Rockingham County and died in Harris County, Georgia on November 27, 1836. He married Annie Nicks, a native of Guilford County, North Carolina. She was either a sister or close relative of Elizabeth Nicks who was the first wife of George Purcell of Rockingham County. See Guilford County Deed Book 12, pp. 57, 61.

¹⁹Philips was probably at the home of John A. Patrick, the partner of his son-in-law James Sharp in the slave trade business,

²⁰This was James Roach, Jr. who was in the freight wagon business and slave trade during this period. Roach later settled in Mississippi.

²¹Job Baker (c. 1760 - 1838) married Sally Philips, (c. 1765 - c. 1820/30), sister of Abraham Philips. Job owned 200 acres of land adjoining Abraham's plantation. Information from Betty J. Baker, Knightdale, North Carolina.

²²John A. Patrick (1794 - 1843) lived at Dublin (now Monroeton) in Rockingham County and was the partner of James Sharp in the slave trade business. See note 19. Patrick was the father of Dr. Hugh L. Patrick of Monroeton. Patrick and Sharp ran an ad the entire year of 1831 in The Greensboro Patriot wanting to purchase slaves.

²³Samuel Sharp was also a son of Adam Sharp of Jacobs Creek. Samuel married Maria Joyce of Rockingham County on January 17, 1822. Marriage Bond date. According to The Greensboro Patriot, Samuel died in Greensboro during 1844. Information from Linda Vernon.

²⁴Pleasant Philips married Betsey Barnett, the daughter of John Barnett who died in Rockingham County during 1833. See Rockingham Will Book B, p. 82. Betsey was born January 23, 1792 and died May 3, 1869 according to her tombstone in the Philips-Barnett Cemetery in Russell County, Alabama. See note 17. James Barnett was a brother of Betsey. There were two William Barnetts. William Sr., died in 1831 and was buried in the Barnett Cemetery in Eden, North Carolina. See The Journal of Rockingham County History and Genealogy, Vol. V, number 1, pp. 7,42. Betsey's sister Lucy married her cousin William Barnett, Jr. and they moved to Russell County, Alabama in 1837. Information from Ingram Philips.

²⁵Robert Saunders was a son of James Saunders, Sr., who owned a large tract of land on Rock House Creek just north of the Philips plantation. Information from Mrs. Fletcher King, Birmingham, Alabama in a letter dated January 8, 1979 to Bob Carter,

Reidsville, North Carolina.

²⁶Robert Lynch was a son of Hugh Lynch. See Rockingham Will Book A, p. 222.Robert left a will dated March 10, 1831 and proved May Court 1831. Rockingham Will Book B, p. 33. Information from Linda Vernon.

²⁷ Delancy was William DeLancy who married Catherine Roach in September, 1815. Rockingham Marriage Bonds. They were the founders of the Delancy Family in the county.

²⁸"Uncle Doctor" of A.P. Patrick was Dr. James Patrick of Macon, Georgia who was a native of Rockingham County. Dr. Patrick died at Indian Springs, Georgia in 1839. See *The Greensboro Patriot*, June 18, 1839.

²⁹Abram P. Patrick was a grandson of Abraham Philips, being a son of Mary Philips and her first husband. Ebenezer Patrick.

³⁰This was George Broach who married Rachel Martin of Rockingham County. She was a niece of Gov. Alexander Martin and a sister of John Martin who moved to Macon, Georgia. See Rockingham Will Book A, p. 240.

³¹Zachariah Strong was a son of John and Sarah Sneed Strong. He was born May 1, 1774 and died October 29, 1831. He married Ruth Smith August 23, 1797. Information from Linda Vernon.

³²Charles Bruce died in Guilford County at an advanced age. He was active in the Revolutionary War and served as an auditor for the Salisbury District. Information from Linda Vernon. He owned large tracts of land in both Guilford and Rockingham Counties. His residence was at Bruces Crossroads which later became Summerfield. See Sharp's A New Geography of North Carolina, Vol. II, p. 829.

³³The wife of Adam Sharp was Mary Whitesides. Information from Linda Vernon.
³⁴Sidliff may be Philips' spelling for the name Setliff. Several members of the Setliff Family had moved to Rockingham County from Virginia by this time.

³⁵John Miller may be the son of William Miller who died in the Sandy Cross area 1823/24. See Rockingham Will Book A, p. 261. Two John Millers are listed in the 1850 census of Rockingham County.

³⁶This was Capt. Robert Small who secured several land grants on Rock House, Piney and Troublesome Creeks. See Early Families of The North Carolina Counties of Rockingham and Stokes with Revolutionary Service, compiled by the James Hunter Chapter, NSDAR, Madison, North Carolina, Vol. 2, p. 117. Hereinafter cited as Early Families.

³⁷William Lynch was a brother of Robert Lynch mentioned, in note 26.

³⁸Thomas Lowe was the son of Thomas Lowe, Sr. and wife Mary Holman of Jacobs Creek. He was born c. 1794 and died September 28, 1843 in Jones County, Georgia. Thomas was married twice: first to Eliza Lundy in Bibb County, Georgia on November 12, 1829 and second to Ellen Tharp. Information from John M. Sheftall, Atlanta, Georgia and Linda Vernon.

³⁹This was Nat Turner's bloody slave insurrection in Southampton County, Virginia.

⁴⁰Col. Wright is probably John J. Wright. See note 46.

⁴¹Nullifiers proclaimed states rights to void federal tariff laws. In 1832 South Carolina nullified a tariff law and the next year Andrew Jackson stood against states rights with the Force Bill.

⁴²Abraham Philips' daughter, Mary, was born September 26, 1785 in Rockingham County and died in 1837. Her first husband, Ebenezer Patrick died c. 1814. According to Post Office Records 1789 - 1818, he was postmaster of Patricksville from July to October 1812. He was the son of William and Mary Patrick. See Rockingham Will Book A, p. 16. After his death, Mary married James Sharp in October 1815. James

died in 1833 according to the Rockingham Estate Settlements. Mary's son Abraham Patrick moved to Macon, Georgia. Her daughter, Mary, married John Scott and moved to Florida. After John's death she returned to Rockingham County and married Jacob B. Balsely. The descendants of this last marriage who reside in Reidsville are the only family of Abraham Philips who still live in Rockingham County. See The Heritage of Rockingham County, North Carolina, (Hunter Publishing Company: Winston-Salem, 1983), p. 154. Hereinafter cited as The Heritage of Rockingham.

⁴³The county seat was established in 1787 at the location which later became Wentworth. The site was known as Rockingham Court House until 1798 when the General Assembly created the town of Wentworth. See Lindley S. Butler's Rocking-

ham County: A Brief History, p. 22.

⁴⁴Joseph B. Holderby was born in Brunswick County, Virginia in 1804, the son of Joseph and Lucy Broadus Holderby who were married in Caroline County, Virginia in 1797. Joseph B. moved to Wentworth about 1832 when he became Clerk of the Rockingham Court. He was later a merchant in Reidsville and the owner of a stagecoach line. He married Martha Stubblefield in 1827. Dying in 1877, he was buried in the Reid Cemetery behind the First Baptist Church in Reidsville. Information from J.W. Holderby, Reidsville, North Carolina.

⁴⁵John Reed [sic] (June 10, 1777 - July 3, 1844) was a son of Hugh Reid and wife Jemima Carmen Reid. He was a brother of Reuben Reid and uncle of Gov. David Settle Reid. John lived and is buried on the Flat Rock Road in the Monroeton area. See Hugh R. Scott's "History of The Scott, Reid and Settle Families." John Reed's wife was Jane Dilworth, daughter of Benjamin Dilworth. See Rockingham Will Book

B, p. 7

Gol. John J. Wright was probably the son of James Wright of Bedford County, Virginia. See Rockingham Deed Book P, pp. 163, 165, 166. In 1805 he was living in Pittsylvania County, Virginia but by 1807 he moved to Rockingham County where he married Elizabeth Scales. She was the daughter of Nathaniel Scales. The tax list of 1815 recorded John as the owner of 102 acres in the Spring Garden District. His four known children were: Mary Ann, married Dr. James Currie; Alfred M.S. Wright, Martha married George Coleman; Minerva married William Ellington. Marriage information from Linda Vernon. By 1833 John had opened a barroom in Wentworth (per court minutes) and by 1835 he had purchased and sold 50 acres of land near the county seat. Rockingham Deed Book 2dG, p. 62. Wright was operating the Lenox Castle Mineral Springs in 1837 according to The Milton Spectator, July 11, 1837. John J. Wright died before February 1841 and his wife died between February and May 1841. See Rockingham Will Book B, p. 252.

⁴⁷Alexander McClaren owned land on Rock House Creek as early as 1786. Rockingham Deed Book A, p. 110. By 1794 he owned over 500 acres and at sometime built a gristmill on Rock House Creek. See Rockingham Deed Books; B, pp. 26, 54, 178; D, p. 64. McClaren probably moved to Wentworth because he was appointed

entry taker for Rockingham County.

⁴⁸Gallaways Tavern was owned by Robert Gallaway who sold the land to the Commissioners for the site of the county seat in 1787. Robert was born in Scotland on September 23, 1750 and came to America in 1783. In 1793 he married his cousin Mary S. Gallaway of Rockingham County. He was a merchant, plantation owner and Clerk of the Rockingham Court until his death July 9, 1832. See Early Families, Vol. II, p. 42. Gallaway's Tavern stood across the street from Wrigth Tavern in Wentworth.

¹⁹ Josiah Roberts was a son of Joseph and Rebecca Roberts. Josiah lived on Jacobs

Creek before he moved to the county seat. In 1832 he purchased Robert Gallaway's Tavern lot in Wentworth and within a few years bought several other lots. During the 1840s as he sold his property. See Rockingham Deed Books; 2dF, p. 371, 2dn, p. 146. This reference is important because Josiah Roberts is mentioned as brother of the sheriff (Martin Roberts) and is not listed in the will of their father. See Rockingham Will Book, A, p. 19. Information from Linda Vernon.

⁵⁰The sheriff was Martin Roberts who served from c. 1831 until his death August 31, 1844. Martin's wife was Elizabeth Gilliland. Their son James Roberts served as sheriff of Rockingham County during the 1850s. See The Heritage of Rockingham, p. 42.

⁵¹One of these stores was owned by Robert Doak who purchased part of the Gallaway property in 1833. Robert Martin who was well known to Philips probably had a store in Wentworth at this time.

⁵²This was Philips' land in Haywood County, Tennessee. See note 10.

⁵³Abraham Baker was a son of Job and Sally Philips Baker and a nephew of Abraham Philips. He was appointed Deputy County Surveyor in 1832. He never married and continued to live with his sisters at their father's homeplace adjoining the Philips plantation. Born c. 1800, he died prior to 1870. Information from Betty J. Baker, Knightdale, North Carolina.

⁵⁴See note 16.

⁵⁵Charles Philips' wife was Annie Nicks. See note 18.

⁵⁶Pierce Philips was a son of Isaac Phillips who died in 1828 and was a grandson of Abraham. Information from a letter dated December 25, 1984 from Mariam K. Morgan of Minden, Louisiana to Peggy Osborne, Eden, North Carolina.

⁵⁷"Sister Sharp" was Mary Philips Patrick Sharp, daughter of Abraham.

 $^{58}\mbox{The Rockingham}$ Court met for sessions in February, May, August and November.

⁵⁹Henry Moffett married Dorinda Philips the daughter of Charles Philips. See note 56.

60."The Governor" maybe a nickname for John A. Patrick.

61"Brother Sharp" is Charles' brother-in-law James Sharp.

⁶²Charlotte Linder Orran was the daughter of Nathaniel Linder of Rockingham County. She married John Orran and was living in Cannon County, Tennessee when the letter was written.

⁶³This statement seems to indicate that Pleasant Philips once taught a private school in Rockingham County.

⁶⁴Sterling Lanier was a son of Sampson Lanier who moved from Virginia to Rockingham County c. 1795. Sampson owned a gristmill on Troublesome Creek which later became the property of the Price Family. He died 1822/23. See Rockingham Will Book A, p. 218. Sampson Lanier was a brother of Abraham Philips' wife, Cynthia Lanier.

⁶⁵David Lanier was a son of Sampson Lanier.

⁶⁶Buckner Lanier was also a son of Sampson Lanier. See note 64.

⁶⁷"Now in life" is an antiquated term for still living.

⁶⁸George Purcell purchased the Philips homeplace after Abraham's death in 1836. See note 12.

⁶⁹William Saunders was a son of James Saunders, Sr., an early settler on Rock House Creek. See note 25.

⁷⁰Jinney (or Jane) Saunders was also a daughter of James Saunders, Sr. She owned land at present day Bakers Cross Roads. See *The Journal of Rockingham County History and Genealogy*, Vo. IV, number 2, pp. 63-65.

⁷¹William Orran was living in Rockingham County as early as 1818 when he was

traveling to Dorchester County, Maryland to purchase negroes for resale in the south. He was possibly a partner with James Philips in this business. See Dorchester County, Maryland, Deed Abstracts 5 ER, p. 244; 6 ER, pp. 434, 525, 528, 636. William married Mary Joyce of Rockingham County in October 1819. Marriage bond. On October 23, 1821 Andrew Joyce sold the couple a 220 acre farm on the Mayo River. Rockingham Deed Book W, p. 99. According to the Rockingham Superior Court Docket, 1826-1844, P. 141, the couple were later divorced.

⁷²Reubin Johnson and wife Charlotte were both natives of Virginia according to the 1850 census. He purchased land on Brushy Fory of Rock House Creek by 1802. See Rockingham Deed Book H, p. 58. His tombstone states he died 6-25-1856 at age 86 years, 2 months, 10 days. Recorded by Fred Small of Greensboro, North Carolina.

⁷³Thomas Lytle (c. 1781-1859) was a blacksmith who purchased 363 acres of the James Saunders, Sr., land on Bold Run and Rock House Creeks in 1800. He also purchased 200 acres in 1810. Lytle lost his property in 1849 but lived on the land until his death in December 1859. See note 70.

⁷⁴Moses C. Napier died March 22, 1855 aged 75 years, 4 months and 25 days. His wife, Sally Martin Napier, died March 11, 1855 aged 73 years, 11 months and 10 days. Both are buried in Speedwell Church Cemetery. Sally was the daughter of Robert Martin, Sr., and niece of Gov. Alexander Martin. See Rockingham Will Book A, p. 240. In 1822 Moses Napier purchased 520 acres on Rock House Creek from Robert Martin. Rockingham Deed Book X, p. 142. The Family were large slave owners. Moses and Sally's children were: Robert Martin Napier, never married; Elizabeth Champion Napier, never married; John Napier, insane; Martha Martin Napier, Jane Hunter Napier. One of the last two daughters married Mr. Wall and had one child, Mary E. Wall, who was apparently the only grandchild of Moses Napier. Mary Wall (1837-1874) married William B. Johnston of Caswell County, North Carolina in 1860. See Marjorie Craig, Family Records of Henrietta Alberta Ratliffe and Jasper Newton Craig, (Reidsville, North Carolina: private, 1955). Also see The Reidsville Review, February

⁷⁸McClaren's Mill on Rock House Creek was built by Alexander McClaren sometime between 1788 and 1809. See Rockingham Deed Books: B, p.26; N, p. 303. Robert Martin owned the property from 1809 until 1822 when he sold it to Moses C. Napier. The mill probably never operated after the Civil War. A tradition grew up in the area that the remains of the dam were part of an early "Rock House" but Philips mention of McClarens Mill indicates that the rocks are part of the milldam.

⁷⁶Ellerson Young, Sr., sold land to Ellerson, Jr., in 1803. See Rockingham Deed Book I, p. 54. In 1811 Ellerson Young married Susanna Mount. Marriage bonds. He married again in 1850 to Polley Hobbs.

⁷⁷Sally Baker (1790-1874) was a daughter of Job and Sally Philips Baker and a niece of Abraham Philips. She never married and continued to live at her father's homeplace. She left a will recorded in Will Book E, p. 77. Information from Betty J. Baker, Knightdale, North Carolina.

⁷⁸Cynthia Baker (1798-1880/85), sister of Sally, married Henry Troth in 1823. The couple had one daughter, Sarah, who married Robert Brown II of the Sharon Church area. After Henry died Cynthia lived with her sister Sally and brother Abraham at the Baker homeplace. Information from Betty J. Baker, Knightdale, North Carolina.

⁷⁹John Martin was born April 10, 1791, son of Robert Martin, Sr. and nephew of Gov. Alexander Martin. He married Eliza J. Walker, on August 18, 1822. John Martin moved to Twiggs County, Georgia by November 1822 when he deeded land in Rockingham County to his "natural offspring" Luther and Angeline Linder. See Rockingham Deed

The Philips Letters

Book X, p. 155. He died April 10, 1842 in Macon, Georgia. See *The Greensboro Patriot*, April 26, 1842, and Bible records from Linda Vernon.

⁸⁰According to the "Purcell Family History", Quinton was a doctor, married a Miss

Farley and lived in Chipley, Georgia. Also see notes 12 and 68.

81 Rev. Jacob Whitworth (born c. 1775) was son of Isaac Whitworth who settled in western Rockingham County by 1754. Jacob married Elizabeth Trolinger in 1806 and died in Brookhaven, Mississippi on April 22, 1841. See Early Families, Vol. II, pp. 139,140.

⁸²Old Mr. Fowler was probably Samuel Fowler who sold 300 acres of land on Brushy Fork of Rock House Creek in 1814. William Perry Fowler had purchased the same land in 1797. A field rock marker in a cemetery on this land indicates that "W.F." died in 1800. See Rockingham Deed Books: H. p. 71: P. p. 271.

⁸³Isaac Baker was a son of Job and Sally Philips Baker and a nephew of Abraham Philips. He appears to have moved south with Abraham's sons, first to Georgia then to Alabama. Isaac was still living in Alabama in 1860 as mentioned by the letter. He was born July 6, 1795 according to his own statement in the Abraham Philips pension records. Other children of Job and Sally P. Baker not previously mentioned were: John Baker c. 1784-?; Polly c. 1786-?; Hannah c. 1788- prior to 1830; Charles c. 1797- prior to 1870; Joseph c. 1802- prior to 1880; Elizabeth c. 1810- prior to 1830. Information from Betty J. Baker, Knightdale, North Carolina.

NORTH CAROLINA LEGISLATIVE PAPERS-NUMBER ONE

Transcribed by Betty J. Baker

Editor's note: Betty J. Baker, a member of the Rockingham County Historical Society and a resident of Knightdale, North Carolina, has transcribed several of the North Carolina General Assembly Session Records concerning the Rockingham County area for publication in the Journal. Some of these records contain new historical information never before published. Several of the petitions contain the signatures of many county residents and since some of the records pre-date the 1790 census, hopefully the information will be helpful to genealogists.

Rockingham County was formed by the North Carolina legislature on December 29, 1785 from the northern portion of Guilford County. The first legislative bill printed in this series is a House of Commons Bill, dated November 1784 which would have created a new county from the northern portion of Guilford known as Blount. The bill failed after its second reading and one year later the legislature formed the new county but changed the name to Rockingham.

A Bill for dividing of Guilford County

In the House of Commons 18 Nov. 1784 read the Second time and laid over until the next Assembly
By Order of J. Hunt CHC

Whereas The Large Extent of The County of Guilford Renders it Grievious and Troublesome To many of The Inhabitants Thereof To attend The Courts and General Elections and Other Publick Meetings appointed Therein

Be it Therefore Enacted by The General Assembly of The State of North Carolina and it is hereby Enacted by The Authority of The Same That from and after the Passing of This Act, The Said County of Guilford Be Devided by an East and West Line Beginning at Haw River Bridge near James Martins.

And That all That part of The Late County of Guilford which lies to The South of Said Line shall Continue and Remain a Destinct County By The name of Guilford, and all That other part of The Said County of Guilford which Lies North of The Said Dividing Line, Shall Thence fourth, be Erected into a new and Distinct County, by The Name of Blount And for the Due administration of Justice, Be it Enacted By The authority aforesaid That a Court for The Said County of Blount Shall be held Constantly by The Justices Thereof on The fourth monday in Nov. Febry may & august and The Justices for The Said County of Blount are hereby authorized and Impowered To hold The first Court in the same at The House of Adam Tate on Dan River The fourth monday in February next and all Subsequent Courts for said County on The Days above appointed for Holding Courts Therein, at any place To which The said Justies Shall from Court To Court adjourn Themselves, untill a Courthouse Shall be Built for Said County of Blount and Then all Causes Matters and Things, Depending in Said Court, and all manner of Process Returnable To The same, Shall be adjourned To Such Court House, and all Courts held in and for Said County of Blount shall be held by Commission To The Justices, in The Same Manner, and under The Same Rules and Restrictions, and Shall have and Exercise The Same power and Jurisdiction, as are or Shall be Prescribed for Other Courts held for The Several Counties in This State.

And be it further Enacted by The Authority afore Said, That nothing herein Contained Shall be Construed To Debar The Late Sheriffs and Collectors of The Said County of Guilford, as The same Stood undivided, To make Distress for any Levies, fees, or other Dues, now actually due and owing from The Inhabitants of Said County as it formerly Stood undivided, In The Same manner as by Law The Said Sheriff or Collectors Could or might have Done, if The Said County had Remained undivided, and The Said Levies, fees and other Dues, Shall be Collected and accounted for in The Same Manner as if This Act had never been made any Things To The Contrary, not Withstanding.

And be it further Enacted by The Authority aforesaid, That after The passing of This Act The Said County of Blount Shall be, Continue and Remain, Part of The District of The Supeior Court of Law and Justice Usually held for The District of Hillsborough and The County

Treasurer of The Said County of Blount Shall from Time to Time account for and pay To The publick Treasurer of The District of Hillsbo James Hall for the time being, all publick Levies by him Collected, or wherewith he Shall Stand Chargeable in The Same Manner, and under The Like pains and panalties, as other County Treasurers.

And be if further Enacted by The Authority aforesaid, that Charles Bruce, Wm Dent Abraham Philips, John Leak, Ralph Gorrel be appointed Commissioners, and They are hereby Impowered and Required To Run the Said Dividing Line Between The Counties of Guilford and Blount Agreeable To The Directions of This act, which Said Line when run by the Commissioners or a Majority of Them, Shall be by Them Entered on Record in The Court of Each of The Said Counties, and Shall Thereafter be Deemed and Taken to be The Dividing Lines Between The Said Counties of Guilford and Blount.

And be it further Enacted by The Authority aforesaid That James Hunter, Saml Henderson, Hugh Chellish (Challis), Henry Skales (Scales), Abraham Phillips The Survivor or Survivors of Them be, and They are hereby Impowered and Directed to agree and Contract with workmen for Erecting and Building A Courthouse, Prison and Stocks for The use of Said County of Blount at Such place as They or a Majority of Them, or Their Survivors Shall Agree upon.

And for Reimbursing The Said Commissioners The Money They Shall Expend in Erecting The Said Buildings, and Running the Dividing Line Between The Said Counties, Be it Enacted by the Authority aforesaid That a Tax of one Shilling on each & every poll and a tax of four Pence on every hundred acres of Land Shall be, and is hereby Assessed on The Taxable property in The Said County of Blount for three years, to Commence from The passing of This Act, and That all persons who Shall Refuse or Neglect to pay Said Tax at The time Limited for payment of publick Taxes, Shall be Liable To The Same Penalties and Distress as for non payment of publick Taxes and The Collecttors of the Said County are hereby Required and Directed to Account for any pay The Same Monies by Them so Collected to The Commissioners aforesaid, after Deducting five Cent for their Trouble in Collecting The Same, and in Case of failure or Neglect in any of The Said Collectors, Such Collectors So failing or Neglecting, Shall be Liable to The Same penalties and recoveries. as by law may be had Against Collectors of Publick Taxes in Like Cases.

And be it further Enacted by The authority aforesaid, that all

manner of Suits Causes and pleas, whither Civil or Criminal now Commenced and Depending in The County Court of Guilford Shall Continue and may be prosecuted To a final End and Determination any Thing in This Act To The Contrary Notwithstanding.

And be it further Enacted by the authority aforesaid That The Court of The said County of Blount shall appoint six Jurors to attend at every Supr Court that there be held for the said District of Hillsbo.

In The House of Commons 18 Nov. 1784 read The Second Time and laid over until the next Assembly, By Order of J. Hunt CHC.

From: General Assembly Session Records Oct.-Nov., 1784, Box 2 Nov. 1 House Bill

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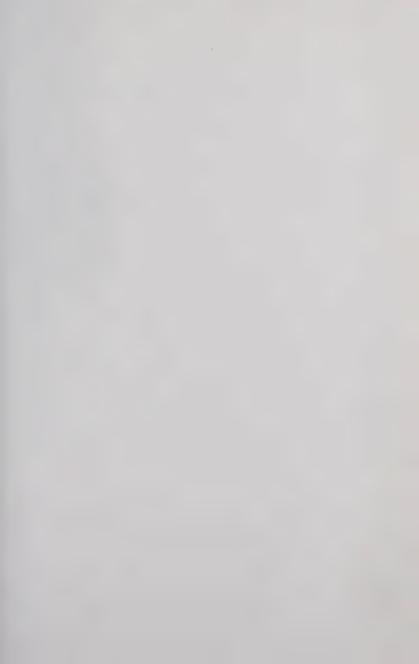
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